World/A10
Ex-'American Idol' contestant claims affair with Paula Abdul

Across/A17
SC ruling means Camp John Hay developers owe gov't P4-B tax

Business/B1
Alfonso Yuchengco vows to raise P250M to help Pacific Plans

Metro/A21
Court stops MMDA no-contact arrest traffic scheme

News/A2
Bank official in Erap trial testifies Dichavez owns Jose Velarde account

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Thursday, May 5, 2005 ★★★ 50 pages / 10 sections / Vol. 20 / No. 146 P18

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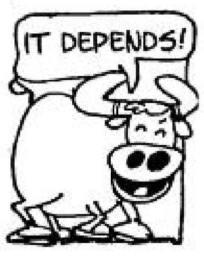
Meaning of destabilizer, according to Ermita



By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

TO MALACAÑANG, the word destabilizer these days means either of two things: someone who calls for the ouster of President Macapagal-Arroyo or any-

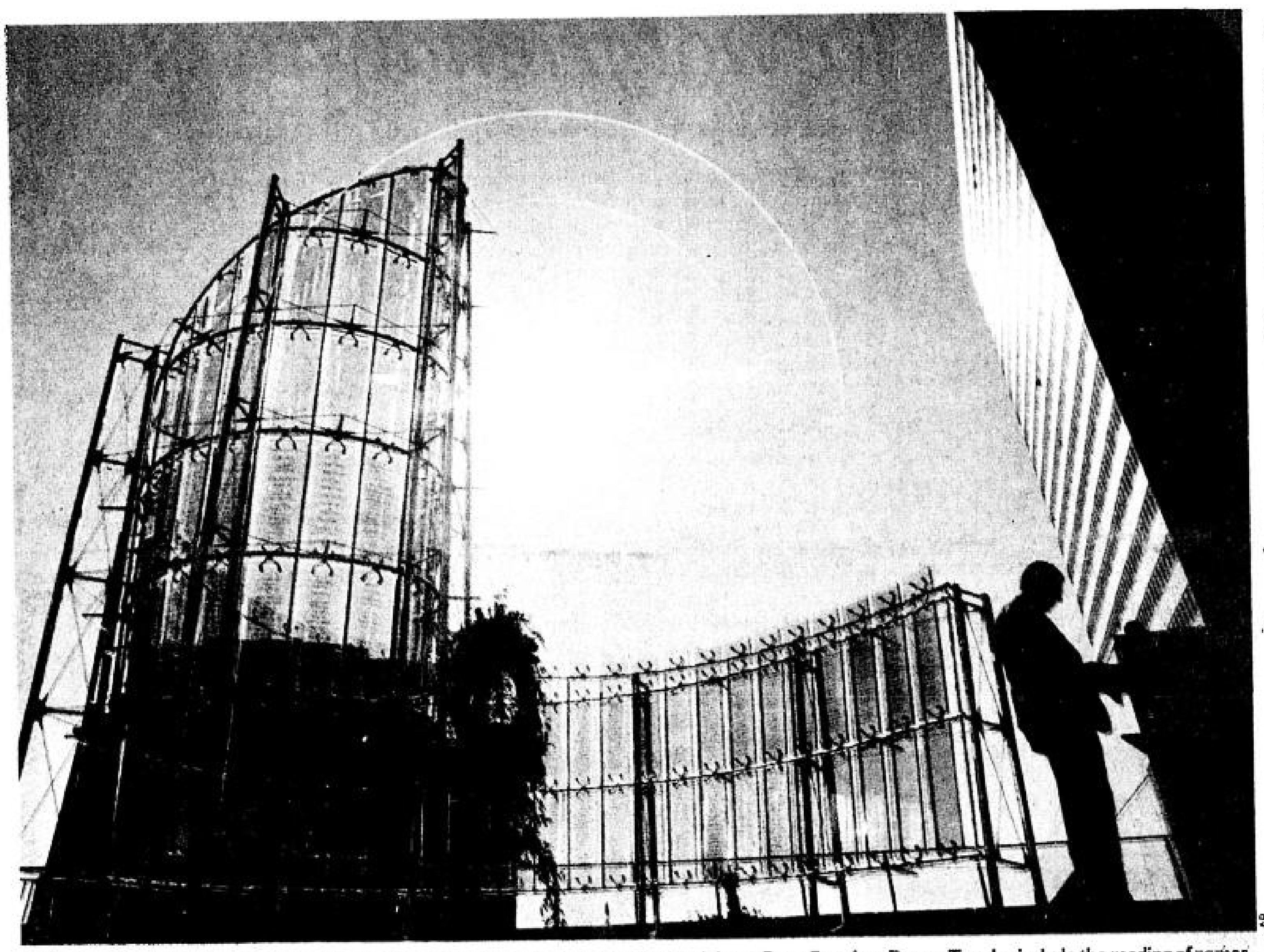
MEANING/ A20

RECOVERED from crime scene: A .45 caliber pistol owned by Cantoneros and 8 empty shells from the suspects' gun, also a .45. COURTESY OF MINDANAO OBSERVER

Another journalist killed in Mindanao

HARD HITTING: Klein Cantoneros of radio station dxAS was on his motorcycle when he was shot 8 times. Police reported two gunmen were sighted. COURTESY OF DXASS-FM

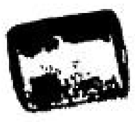
Dipolog City broadcaster ambushed on way home



REDEDICATION rites of the Freedom Forum Journalists Memorial in Arlington, Virginia, on Press Freedom Day on Tuesday include the reading of names of journalists killed in the line of duty since 1812. For 2004, 78 names have been written, including nine Filipinos, on the memorial's spiraling glass structure.

By PDI Mindanao Bureau and Luigi A. del Puerto

PAGADIAN CITY—A day after an international press organization described the Philippines as the most murderous place for journalists in the world, a radio broadcaster was shot eight times yesterday noon.



SLUG taken from victim's large intestine.

He died at 11 p.m. at the Dipolog Medical Center in Dipolog City.

Klein Cantoneros, 34, a hard-hitting commentator of radio station dxAA, was on his way home in Barangay Santa Filomena at around 12:30 a.m. when three unidentified men shot him, police said.

Cantoneros was the fourth media man marked for assassination in the Philippines in less than two months.

On the occasion of World Press Freedom Day, on Tuesday, the New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) noted that the Philippines has become the most murderous place for media men, followed by Iraq, Colombia, Bangladesh and Russia, since 2000.

The Paris-based Reporters Sans Frontieres (Reporters Without Borders) also criticized the Philippine government for allowing the killing of journalists to go unchallenged and unpunished. The group demanded an investigation of these killings by the United Nations.

President Macapagal-Arroyo denounced the attack on Cantoneros but rejected allegations about the state of press freedom in the country.

"We condemn this (attack) and we expect the Philippine National Police to do its job in investigating

ANOTHER/ A19

Names of 9 slain RP journalists on freedom memorial

ARLINGTON, Virginia—In a somber rededication of a memorial to journalists who died in the line of work last year, 78 people, including nine Filipinos, were honored Tuesday, their names written on the spiraling glass structure.

In a ceremony under a mid-morning sun that reflected a rainbow of colors off the memorial, family, friends and colleagues gathered to hear the reading of the names of 78 journalists from about two dozen countries.

The nine Filipino journalists whose names were added to the Freedom Forum Journalists Memorial in Arlington, their news organizations and the dates they died were Elpidio "Ely" Binoya, Radyo Natin, June 17; Romero Binungcal, Remate and Bulgar,

NAMES/ A19

Taruc dies; 92

By Luige A. del Puerto

FORMER HUK supremo Luis Taruc died of heart failure yesterday at the St. Luke's Medical Center in Quezon City.

The 92-year-old former leader of the Hukbong Bayan Laban

TARUC/ A19

GMA confronted Roy Señeres on 'plot'

By Fe Zamora

ON TWO occasions, once to his face and the other before labor leaders, President Macapagal-Arroyo branded the chief of her National Labor Relations Commission as a destabilizer for allegedly seeking US help to oust her.

Former Ambassador and NLRC chair Roy Señeres yesterday confirmed to the INQUIRER the confrontation with Ms Arroyo but said he denied being involved in destabilization plots.

Señeres said intrigues sown by officials close to the President had fueled her suspicions that even her own officials were involved in destabilization plots.

In a telephone interview, Señeres denied he had sought US support to oust Ms Arroyo as the President had alleged during a meeting with labor leaders in Malacañang on April 26.

GMA/ A20

Yorac questions use of coco funds by high-living officials

By Tony S. Bergonia

A LETTER from Haydee Yorac, the resigned chair of the Presidential Commission on Good Government, to the chair of the United Coconut Planters Bank, reveals her concern about the conduct of officers of the Coconut Industry Investment Fund, a group of companies set up with coconut levy funds.

Yorac questioned the CIIF top officials' use of company funds, including purchase of vehicles at company expense, travel privileges of CIIF top executives and even spouses, excessive per diems and unlimited representation expenses, and memberships in golf clubs that she noted was "a luxury that coconut farmers can ill-afford."

YORAC/ A4

5 governors on bishop's list of 'jueteng' operators

By Christian V. Esguerra

FIVE incumbent governors, a vice governor and a mayor have made it to the "Archbishop's List" as among the "jueteng" operators who allegedly pay billions of pesos every month to their government protectors.

All of those officials are from Luzon, according to the list which Lingayen-Dagupan Archbishop Oscar Cruz turned over to a congressional committee.

The list, a copy of which was obtained by the INQUIRER, alleges that a top official of the Philippine National Police gets as much as P19.6 million a month in payoffs from jueteng lords.

The alleged payoffs to the PNP official come every 15th and 30th of the month—or as regularly, it appears, as a government employee's paycheck.

Cruz, who turned over the list to the House

5 GOVERNORS/ A4

JOAN BONDOC

HAVE A HEART. Sleeping off the heat and the hunger, this homeless couple bed down right where weariness overtakes them along Commonwealth Avenue in Quezon City. A touch of love looms in the horizon with a heart drawn on a wall of UP Diliman.

CBCP: 8 anti-GMA bishops on their own

By Christian V. Esguerra and Michael Lim Ubac

THE HEAD of the influential Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines yesterday said the statements by three bishops supporting calls for the ouster of President Macapagal-Arroyo did not reflect the thinking of the CBCP.

Davao Archbishop Fernando Capalla, president of the CBCP, issued the clarification even as an organization of priests, nuns, lay people and workers of various Christian groups backed the call of Bishops Julio Xavier Labayen, Antonio Tobias, and Deogracias Iniguez for "a change in the system."

On Tuesday, five more bishops made known their support for the

CBCP/ A4

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Second FrontPage

Text us your feedback: inquirer news name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Mindanao including Palawan will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to at times cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms in the afternoon or evening.
SOURCE: PAGASA

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

COMPILED BY: ERIKA SARMIENTO, PDI RESEARCH/05/05/05

Poor told: Fend for yourselves

By Gil Cabacungan

ERMITA

MALACAÑANG is urging the lowly Filipino masses to "fend for themselves" by working harder to get through the tough economic times instead of blaming the government for their woes.

"We encourage our fellow Filipinos to work harder on their own try to strive to get jobs and do the best under the situation to fend for themselves," said Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita in a briefing in a Malacañang.

"We Filipinos are known for our strength of character and resiliency to be able to stand up to trying moments such as this. This is not the first time that we are finding difficulties," said Ermita who recalled the economic crises from the 1960s to the 1980s.

"Somehow we pulled through and we are confident that if we try hard enough instead of blaming many people or any agency for this we will improve our conditions."

Ermita's remarks mirrored the results of a recent survey by Pulse Asia Inc. that showed that poor Filipinos were relying more on themselves—their own families, relatives and friends—than on government, which the respondents believe has not fulfilled its promise of creating more jobs and keeping prices of basic commodities affordable.

"They seek new sources of income, reduce their food consumption, and borrow money primarily from relatives and friends in coping with inflation. They pin their hopes of escaping poverty on at least one member of their family getting a regular job and on the education of their children. Even as few of them look to government as their source of hope in escaping poverty, they expect government to ensure availability of jobs and adequate supply of food at affordable prices," said Pulse Asia.

The survey looked into the poor's coping strategies and what they cite as their hope in escaping poverty."

"A majority of the poor will still resort to positive measures such as looking for a job abroad and praying when there seems to be no hope of escaping poverty. But a third of them think that the poor in such a situation will engage in illegal livelihood activities or support subversive activities," Pulse Asia said.

Ermita did not comment on the survey results showing that more Filipinos were getting desperate. Instead, Ermita noted the same survey showed that "Filipinos who have not been doing very well are not really blaming government because they know these things are brought about by natural forces.

"They cannot improve their lives by putting the blame on anybody especially on government when factors that contribute to such state right now are not really done by government but by factors beyond the control of government such as rising prices," Ermita said.

No Senate consensus yet on VAT

THERE was no consensus after all that a majority of the Senate panel to the bicameral conference committee favors granting President Macapagal-Arroyo a standby authority to raise the value-added tax rate to 12 percent.

This surfaced after Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile vehemently denied he was among the five senators in the nine-man Senate panel who favored a proposal granting Ms Arroyo such power to break the deadlock on the VAT measure in the bicameral conference.

"Tell your source (of reports), he's a liar," he told one of the reporters.

On the contrary, Enrile said he opposed the proposal and denied forging any "agreement with anybody on the standby authority."

But the source insisted that Enrile as well as Senators Ralph Recto, head of the panel and proponent; Richard Gordon, Rodolfo Biazon and Edgardo Angara were in favor of the proposal.

Gordon confirmed he was in favor of the proposal, but stressed that the government should strictly collect revehues, expand the tax base and curb smuggling.

"Since the majority of the senators appear to be headed to a compromise where standby power will be given to the President we have to get this off the ground so we can concentrate on other things that we must do for our country in terms of legislation," he said.

Angara, for his part, admitted that he agreed "in principle" with the proposal, but said the government should first improve tax collection efficiency from 70 to 80 percent before the President is granted such power. *TJ Burgonio*

SOLIMAN with "Bright kids" Paul Bernard Sumaya and Julianne Benitez.

RP not friendly to kids

By Christian V. Esguerra

THE PHILIPPINE condition is anything but friendly to children.

Almost 30 out of 1,000 Filipino infants die before even turning one, while about 300,000 babies survive birth but live with intellectual impairment each year, according to the Department of Health.

If ever they survive their first year, they would have to contend with another alarming figure—about 40 out of every 1,000 infants die before reaching the age of five, health officials said.

Those who live to get to school might not be lucky enough to graduate from elementary. That's because seven out of 10 Grade 1 pupils don't reach the sixth grade. Many drop out during their first three years in school.

The sorry condition of the Filipino child has prompted the DOH and other key agencies to relaunch "Bright Child," a campaign calling for government intervention to ensure children's growth and survival.

Part of the effort is the DOH's Ligtas Buntis reproductive health program that is meant to reduce maternal and child mortality.

According to the DOH, maternal mortality stood at 172 for every 10,000 live births. Seven out of 10 pregnancies are also considered high-risk.

"Child bearing should not cause death, but it is happening here," Social Welfare Secretary Dinky Soliman said in a press conference yesterday.

Soliman was particularly passionate about families who could not support their children, primarily because of their large number.

"Any woman or parent has no right to give birth to a child whom she cannot support until he reaches at least 18 years," she said.

Still, many are born to already big—and impoverished—families.

The Bright Child program will educate parents on the need to support the children through proper nutrition, education and growth.

Soliman said the government had lined up supplementary feeding programs in "nutritionally depressed" areas like Regions 5 and 8 and the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

The goal is to bring down to at least 17 percent the malnourished population that stands at 27 percent of children aged five and below as of 2003, she said.

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DFA: Talks to go on despite Joma's woes

By Nikko Dizon and Delfin Mallari Jr.
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

THE TALKS will continue.

The Department of Foreign Affairs said yesterday the dismissal by a European court of the cases filed by communist leader Jose Maria Sison will not affect the peace negotiations between the Arroyo administration and the communist rebels.

"They're not related," said DFA spokesperson Gilbert Asuque. "The peace talks will continue and the discussions will be guided by the Terms of Reference... the decision of the court of first instance in the court of justice of the European Communities, from our point of view, will have no bearing on the case."

The European court has rejected Sison's petitions to gain access to documents that served as bases for his inclusion in the "terrorist list" of the European Union and for the EU to reveal to him the identities of the states that had provided the bases for his inclusion in the list.

His lawyer, Jan Fermon, had said that the communist leader will appeal the court's decision.

Sison was placed on the EU's list of terrorists in 2003. The same year, Sison, founding chair of the Communist Party of the Philippines and political consultant of the National Democratic Front, filed the cases with the European Communities' court.

Besides Sison, CPP and its armed wing, the New People's Army, are also on the terror list of the United States.

Peace talks between the Arroyo government and the communist insurgents have been stalled with the administration's failure to convince the US to remove Sison and the NPA from its terror list.

Sison has been living in self-exile since 1987, a year after the first people power revolution that toppled the Marcos dictatorship.

However, Sison said the resumption of peace talks between the NDF and the government had become "nil or dim" under the Arroyo administration.

"The regime is already so weak and so isolated and yet it seeks to impose preconditions in violation of the existing agreements on the framework and modalities of the peace negotiations," Sison said in his message to Bagong Alyansang Makabayan's 20th founding anniversary.

Sison backed Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal's call to intensify the "people's war" to oust the present leadership and "pave the way for a new government that can comply with the existing agreements in the peace negotiations."

Earlier, Fidel Agcaoili, chair of the NDF human rights committee, made it clear that the Arroyo administration must comply with all existing agreements that the government had signed with the insurgents if it truly wanted to resume the formal talks.

Another witness attests to Velarde account

By Nelson F. Flores

DEFENSE witness Romuald Dy-Tang yesterday maintained that it was Jaime Dichavez, and not ousted President Joseph Estrada, who owned the controversial Jose Velarde account.

Dy-Tang claimed during the continuation of the multimillion-peso plunder trial of Estrada at the Sandiganbayan that he even assisted Dichavez in opening the Velarde account on Aug. 25, 1999, upon the request of PCI-Equitable Bank chair George L. Go.

Dy-Tang, an Equitable official, said he personally knew Dichavez and that he later asked Beatrice Bagsit, who earlier testified in court, to take care of the special account because of his workload.

When asked by defense lawyer Cleofe Verzola if he saw Dichavez accomplish the signature cards, Dy-Tang said he did not see Dichavez sign the cards nor sign his name as Jose Velarde when he opened the account.

Dy-Tang said the signature cards were given on Aug. 25 to Dichavez, but the cards, already signed and accomplished were only returned on Oct. 7, 1999.

Defense lawyer Jose Flaminiano said Dy-Tang's testimony clearly proved that the Jose Velarde account was owned by Dichavez.

However, Special Prosecutor Dennis Villa-Ignacio said Dy-Tang's testimony only corroborated the prosecution panel's claim that it was Estrada, and not Dichavez, who owned the Velarde account.

He said in a sworn testimony by Dy-Tang before the Ombudsman, the bank executive admitted that he "gave the set of signature cards to Mr. Dichavez for the depositor to fill up."

It's confirmed: Guingona is RP envoy to China

By TJ Burgonio

IT'S OFFICIAL: former Vice President Teofisto Guingona is now the country's ambassador to China.

The Commission on Appointments yesterday confirmed the appointment of the 76-year-old Guingona despite a last-ditch attempt by former Sen. Francisco Tatad to block it.

At its plenary session, the commission, chaired by Senate President Franklin Drilon, unanimously approved a recommendation by the committee on foreign affairs endorsing Guingona's appointment.

Earlier, Tatad appeared at a caucus of the commission members and challenged Guingona's appointment, citing the Foreign Service Act which specifies the compulsory retirement of foreign service employees and officers at age 65.

"The nominee is long past sixty-five. Unless he could be named ambassador without becoming an employee of the DFA, there is simply no way of appointing him legally to that position," he said in his letter to Drilon.

Confirmation delayed

Members of the influential body entertained debate on the matter, but eventually ruled that Tatad's opposition had been preempted by the earlier endorsement of Guingona's appointment by the committee on foreign affairs.

Undaunted, Tatad said he would consult his lawyer on the possibility of bringing the case to the courts.

Meanwhile, Angelo Reyes' confirmation as Interior Secretary was further delayed after the committee on local government decided to hear the testimonies of other "oppositors" next week.

At the hearing, Reyes came under intense grilling for his decision to waive the security clearance of Gen. Victor Corpus, whom he had appointed to head the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines in 2001.

At the same hearing, Reyes came face to face with a man, identified as Jonathan Tiongco, who he believed had a part in escorting "bogus witnesses" to the hearings to derail his confirmation. Tiongco denied this.

At the resumption of his testimony, retired Col. Cristobal Irlanda, an oppositor (not a CA member as earlier reported), questioned Reyes' fitness to head a government agency on the grounds that he appointed Corpus as Isafp chief without a security clearance, among others.

At the time of Corpus' appointment, Reyes was Armed Forces chief.

Sen. Rodolfo Biazon, chair of the committee on local government, reminded Reyes that former officials who had served as AFP chiefs before him had abided by rules like requiring security clearances even of personnel applying for clerical posts.

Reyes, however, justified this, saying "There was this transition period. Gen. (Jose) Calimlim had to relinquish his post. We had to appoint somebody immediately. There was a need for somebody to be appointed immediately."

When asked by Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile if he was disciplined by the President for this, Reyes said: "No. They probably thought it was a good decision."

He vowed not to be remiss again if he were confirmed by the commission, saying "I will profit from this session: I will go through the process [next time.]"

Later, members of the commission summoned Tiongco for questioning from among the crowd of spectators after establishing that he was the person who escorted "oppositors" Eduardo Arabit yesterday and Rosalie Ramoso last Tuesday.

Just an observer

"He's trying to persuade people to issue statements that will derail my confirmation," Reyes said of Tiongco, noting that even anti-crime advocate Teresita Ang-See was among those approached by Tiongco.

But Tiongco flatly denied this, saying "I'm just an observer. I'm always here at the Senate."

Arabit alleged that he was nabbed, tortured and jailed by agents of Reyes' National Anti-Kidnapping Task Force in March this year, while Ramoso insinuated on Tuesday that Reyes had a hand in the killing of his brother in December 2003.

Both, however, failed to convince the commission members when they refused to say who helped them prepare their affidavits.

Reyes said he had ordered the national police to "get into the bottom" of the conspiracy to derail his confirmation through bogus witnesses.

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Masbate twins undergo tests

By Michael Lim Ubac

A DAY after arriving in Manila, the Garganta twins yesterday went through a series of tests, which could take weeks or even months, to establish if they could be physically separated by surgery.

Doctors at the Philippine General Hospital said the conjoined twins Angela and Angel Mae went through X-ray, 2D echo and abdominal ultrasound to detect congenital heart anomalies and ascertain their anatomy.

They are scheduled to undergo a CT-scan today.

"There is no official reading yet," said Gwen Pang, fund manager of the Philippine National Red Cross who is keeping track of the girls' condition.

But so far, the doctors had not detected any health problems on the twins who were joined at the waist (with one unbilical cord) when they were born on April 29 in Masbate City, according to Pang.

"The condition of the twins is OK," she reported, stressing that diagnostic and laboratory tests could last for two weeks, so the twins could stay in PGH for the entire duration of the tests.

"I was told that the operation will not happen soon, it's a long process and it's done step by step," said Pang.

Dr. Josefina Almonte, head of the PGH Pediatrics-Surgical ward, told the INQUIRER on Tuesday that any surgical procedure could not be conducted until after the twins were more than two months old.

Other PGH doctors said the ideal age for any surgical operation was 9 months to one year.

Almonte expressed elation that the twins had separate hearts and lungs, which could greatly increase their chances of being surgically separated.

Besides heart anomalies, the tests would ascertain whether the twins had separate gastro-intestinal system, she added.

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CBCP: 8 anti-GMA bishops on their own

From page A1

ouster of President Arroyo. They did not want to be named yet as they feared being "isolated" within the CBCP.

In Naga City, however, the six-member League of Governors in Bicol threw their support behind Ms Arroyo, saying she had won a mandate in last year's presidential election and her ouster would only lead to chaos.

Capalla broke his silence two days after the three bishops and their group, the Kilusang Makabansang Ekonomiya, accused the Arroyo administration of mismanaging the economy by coming up with policies that favor foreign interests to the detriment of the country's poor.

Capalla explained that official CBCP positions were made through its biannual general assembly or its permanent council consisting of 12 bishops representing the country's different regions.

DAGDAG
PASAHE,
DAGDAG
PAHIRAP!
AKBAYAN.

NO TO FARE increases, Akbayan makes its sentiments known during a picket along the Quezon City Circle on Wednesday. The militant group wants President Arroyo to confront the big oil companies if only she has the guts, they say. JOAN BONDOC

Free to air opinions

The CBCP president, however, said individual bishops were free to air their opinions, particularly when they speak for their respective dioceses.

"When individual bishops or a smaller group of bishops speak on issues affecting their people, they speak as spiritual leaders, guides, and teachers of the people entrusted to them," Capalla said in a statement.

"Bishops will not risk uttering statements that may be perceived as damaging to the unity of the country, to the integrity of the Church or the CBCP and its members, if not out of a conviction that they are serving the truth and protecting the welfare of the people," he added.

Masses complaining

Lingayen-Dagupan Archbishop Oscar Cruz, who has been critical of Ms Arroyo, also expressed his support for Labayen, Iniguez, and Tobias after Justice Secretary Raul Gonzales threatened to charge them with sedition.

"I understand them because they touch base with the masses, and the masses really are complaining," Cruz said. "There is some frustration and resentment and even hopelessness."

He warned that filing charges against the three bishops would only prompt other bishops to fight.

Even so, Cruz said he was cool to the idea of another people's revolt or a military takeover as a way of solving the country's economic and political crisis.

"Personally, I wouldn't want another Edsa or a military junta," he said. "There have been two Edsas and a military rule before. But look at us now. We are not really very far from where we were before."

House forum

At a forum in the House of Representatives, however, an organization of priests, nuns, lay people and workers of various Christian groups said the statement of the three bishops seeking a change in the system signified a de facto withdrawal of the Catholic Church hierarchy's support for Ms Arroyo.

The Promotion of Church's People's Response (PCPR) denounced the "continued attacks against civil, political and human rights" under the Arroyo administration.

"Church people desire to create a truly free society in which equality is respected and justice dispensed," PCPR acting secretary general Ron Hubbard said at the forum organized by Rep. Erin Tanada, House vice chair of the special committee on peace, reconciliation and unity, to serve as an "avenue to expose and air sectoral grievances."

Hubbard's statement was supported by Bishop Waldo Baldomero, president of the Iglesia Filipina Independiente's council of bishops, who was also invited to speak in the forum. But Baldomero said the IFI had yet to come up with a official stand on the matter.

Abetting culture of violence

Reading from a two-page declaration titled, "Pahayag ng mga Taong-simbahan," Hubbard cited the killing of 30 journalists since 2001, the assassination of Fr. William Tadena of the IFI in March and the attempted murder of rights lawyer Romeo Capulong.

From January to March this year, 32 activists and members of party-list groups had been killed including the 12 sugar farmers at Hacienda Luisita, according to Hubbard.

"These are just a few on the list of events that restricted and limited the people from enjoying their civil and political rights," he said.

He said the PCPR was alarmed over the inaction of the Arroyo administration although the military and police were believed to be behind the killings.

Hubbard said the government was abetting a culture of violence, apathy and injustice by not bringing the perpetrators to the bar of justice.

6 Bicol governors

Amid calls for Ms Arroyo's ouster, six Bicol governors expressed their support for the constitutional mandate of the President.

Speaking in behalf of the League of Governors in Bicol, Sorsogon Gov. Raul Lee said in a cell phone interview that any extra-constitutional move to oust Ms Arroyo would lead to further instability.

Catanduanes Gov. Leandro Verceles, spokesperson of the the League of Provinces and the Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines, said it was not fair to blame Ms Arroyo's for the country's present ills.

"With rising world oil prices and the debt burden inherited from previous administrations, we cannot expect these problems to be solved overnight," Verceles added.

Camarines Sur Gov. Luis Raymund Villafuerte Jr. said he and the other Bicol governors were ready to initiate moves to protect the President's mandate. *With report by Juan Escandor Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

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5 governors on bishop's list of 'jueteng' operators

From page A1

committee on public order and security on Tuesday, urged the authorities yesterday to validate its contents so the guilty could be punished.

Only prayers

"We have no intelligence funds, we have only 'Hail Marys,'" Cruz said, explaining why he and his supporters could not do the verification job.

Referring to the President's son, Rep. Mikey Arroyo's statements during the committee hearing questioning his findings, Cruz told reporters: "To ask for scientific evidence in this regard is a little out of tune. I don't think that's relevant."

Allegations of links to jueteng lords led to President Joseph Estrada's impeachment and eventual removal from office. Estrada has denied receiving jueteng payoffs.

P13 billion

Cruz told the House committee that the total jueteng payoffs to all officials, from the national level down to the barangays, reached P13 billion a year.

"We found out that the take in jueteng operations was much, much bigger than during the previous administration, with the minimum amount of P13 billion," Cruz said.

The INQUIRER had obtained a reproduction of the list from a source separate from that of the outspoken bishop.

Cruz said that his and the INQUIRER's list "fit" in terms of contents and "entries."

Earlier, a ranking PNP official told the INQUIRER that three close relatives of a top government official had been raking in millions of pesos in jueteng payola every month. He identified them by their code names M1, M2 and JS7.

Neither copy named any relative of President Macapagal-Arroyo as being allegedly involved in the illegal numbers game, as had been speculated in some sectors of media.

The list instead identified as among the alleged jueteng operators a man whose name often turned up whenever the issue of illegal gaming came up.

The man had been summoned to a similar congressional hearing on jueteng before but nothing conclusive had come out of that hearing.

He is allegedly the point man in the provinces of Pangasinan, Isabela, Bataan, Mindoro, Albay, and parts of Pampanga, Ms Arroyo's home province.

24 provinces

Like Cruz's list, the INQUIRER copy mentioned 24 provinces located in six regions, including Metro Manila, where the 14 or 15 operators allegedly collected jueteng money.

Central Luzon appeared to be the most lucrative area for the officer, producing a combined amount of P6.5 million monthly, according to the list.

The official's purported collection from Region 1 allegedly stood at least P4.7 million. He also allegedly got P3.2 million from Southern Tagalog and P2.2 million from the Bicol region.

Based on the list, the least fertile ground for payoffs seemed to be Metro Manila and Rizal province, producing only P200,000 monthly for the officer.

He allegedly received all collections from the 24 provinces through a certain Boy Tangkad and a police senior superintendent.

The senior superintendent is allegedly in charge of the operations of a key unit in Camp Crame.

Info from insiders

"This unit traditionally manages jueteng collections for the [high PNP official]," the source said.

Cruz could not tell how some of the jueteng collections allegedly ended up in the pockets of some ranking government officials.

"We're not jueteng lords and beneficiaries," Cruz said. "Our sources are from inside and outside of the government. We hold [their information] to be true because we can compare notes and many sources are saying one and the same thing."

PNP spokesperson Senior Supt. Leopoldo Bataoil vigorously denied allegations that police officials had received jueteng payoffs.

"We are categorically denying that accusation," Bataoil said on the phone. "But if there is information of a police officer receiving [jueteng payola], we will investigate that and we will charge him."

"With or without that list, however, the PNP will continue its relentless campaign against jueteng," he said.

PNP meeting with Cruz

Bataoil also said the PNP was seeking a meeting with Cruz and other Catholic bishops and religious leaders who were reportedly disgruntled at the way Ms Arroyo was running the country or the way the government's campaign against jueteng was going.

Besides Cruz, Bataoil mentioned the name of Bishop Antonio Tobias as among those that PNP chief Arturo Lomibao wanted to meet with.

He said Lomibao would also meet with Iglesia Ni Cristo and El Shaddai leaders.

'Rumors and hearsay'

In an interview on RMN-dzXL radio, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said reports linking Representative Arroyo to the illegal numbers game were "rumors [and] hearsay" and that there was no evidence to back up the allegations.

Asked whether the President was aware of the rumors, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said: "We never talked about it with the President. But I can be very sure the President knows he has nothing to do with such illegal activity."

Parañaque Rep. Roilo Golez said Congress would use the Cruz list to "pressure" the PNP to crack down on jueteng protectors.

"We will take note of the list as a guide in pressuring the PNP to implement the anti-jueteng law in the areas that were identified," Golez said in an interview.

List to be confidential

"This is for them to build up cases against the local officials because if they tolerate jueteng or do not take action against it, these local officials are liable and can be be penalized with perpetual disqualification from public office," Golez added.

Golez said that the House committee on public order and security would not release the list to the PNP but would point out jueteng-infested areas.

Persons mentioned on Cruz's list will not be summoned by the committee since this would be tantamount to releasing their names to the public, he said. *With reports from Luige A. del Puerto and Philip C. Tubeza*

Yorac questions use of coco funds by high-living CIIF officials

From page A1

The letter was addressed to Jose Perez, the chair of the UCPB, which is the administrator of the CIIF oil mills group.

It was dated April 27, the same day that Yorac's resignation as PCGG chair was announced.

Yorac said the practices of top CIIF officials tended to show that they have not exactly lived up to expectations "to act like good stewards" of the coconut levy funds.

"The CIIF companies are companies financed from coco levy funds ... held by the government in trust for coconut farmers. The companies therefore are expected to act like good stewards of the fund until it can finally be used for the benefit of its stakeholders, the coconut farmers," Yorac said in her letter.

A UCPB source said Perez has decided he would himself head a team to look into the issues that Yorac raised.

Company president

While the Yorac letter did not identify any CIIF official by name, a letter from a group of CIIF employees pointed to company president Rolando A. Golez as the one being referred to.

The employees' letter, addressed to Yorac, said that when Golez arrived at the CIIF, "he immediately ordered the purchase of a Nissan Patrol as his service vehicle."

Golez is also said to be chair and chief executive officer of First Link Around the Globe, chair of Riverside Food Manufacturing Corp. and also chair of Golez Realty and Management Corp.

He is an accounting graduate of Lyceum and, according to the UCPB website, has "completed academic requirements for a master of business administration at the Ateneo de Manila University."

CIIF vice president Antonio Concepcion, the company spokesperson, said Golez had already discussed the matter with Yorac and that Golez had been directed to review the policies.

Concepcion said the issues raised by Yorac were privileges and part of the compensation package of the company's officers.

"These are part of the company's policies and though we have not changed them, they are now being subjected to a thorough review," he said in a phone interview.

He said the review has yet to be completed.

In her letter, Yorac said the use of the funds by top CIIF officials, particularly in the CIIF oil mills group, was questionable and did not pass thorough scrutiny.

She said executives were allowed to purchase vehicles at company expense, but the company's president and finance officer were unable to provide the PCGG with written rules or policies on the program.

P19.5M for cars

"From February 2003 to February 2005 alone, vehicle purchases have already cost the company a total of P19,535,454.55," she said.

She noted that under the car program, executives could buy the vehicles at "book value" five years after "when it shall be considered to have fully depreciated."

A Nissan Patrol bought for P1.9 million in October 2003 can be purchased by the executive concerned for as low as P5,000 in 2008, Yorac said.

A second financial practice that Yorac questioned were the travel privileges of top company officials.

Travel privileges

"For official travels, the practice in the Oil Mills has been to allow the president/CEO to travel first class. The executive's wife, on the other hand, is allowed one trip at company expense," Yorac said.

The traveling executive is also given an "excessive per diem" of $300 which Yorac noted was $200 more than the per diem received by UCPB officials when they are on official trips abroad.

She also noted that the United Coconut Planters International, based in Paris, increased the per diem of directors to $500 due to "the increase of the value of the Euro" which Yorac considered excessive "even considering the cost of living in Europe."

Expenses unlimited

Still another practice questioned by Yorac was the unlimited representation expenses of top CIIF officials. She said the PCGG was not provided with documents to show a system of liquidation that would indicate "how, where and during what occasion the money was spent."

Finally, she noted how the CIIF paid "a considerable sum" for memberships in golf and country clubs.

The CIIF employees, who requested anonymity, said the Nissan Patrol for Golez was bought for P2.2 million and was purchased despite the CIIF's having two Mitsubishi Pajeros that were used by its past president, Antonio Ng.

"Although Mr. Golez is living only in San Lorenzo Village, a stone's throw from his office, the company is paying no less than P25,000 for the fuel consumption of the two vehicles he is using," said the employees' letter.

Golf clubs

It added that Golez charged golf fees, food and drinks in his trips to golf and country clubs and "in the 16 months he [has been] with the CIIF, the company has paid a total of P960,000 for club expenses or an average of P60,000 per month."

"Even the cost of the golf shoes of his wife was charged to the company," it said.

The employees said in his 16 months in office, Golez had traveled eight times with his wife and an entourage of three to five other people at company expense.

The CIIF head and his wife always travel first class, the employees' letter said.

The airfare alone of Golez and his wife, the employees said, cost P2 million. The cost of his trip to the United States and Europe cost the CIIF P6 million, they said.

Heavy losses

They also said the CIIF has been incurring heavy losses.

As of February 2005, they said the CIIF has already lost P70 million. They said estimates of the losses could reach P100 million by March next year.

The Supreme Court in 2001 ruled that the coconut levy funds, collected through a decree imposed by the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos, were prima facie public funds. The Sandiganbayan subsequently declared the funds were conclusively public funds held by government in trust for the coconut farmers.

According to the PCGG, businessman Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco, who was appointed to administer the levy by Marcos, had with his associates bought coconut trading firms, coconut oil mills and export firms using levy funds.

These acquired assets were not placed in the name of the Philippine Coconut Authority but under holding companies under the CIIF owned by six oil mills. These assets were held by the UCPB, the CIIF administrator.

5 milling companies

The CIIF is composed of five companies involved in the milling and refining of coconut oil—Legaspi Oil Co., San Pablo Manufacturing Corp., Cagayan de Oro Oil Co., Southern Luzon Coconut Oil Mill and Granexport Manufacturing Corp.

According to its website, the CIIF has a combined copra crushing capacity of 750,000 metric tons and a refining capacity of 250,000 metric tons.

It has two marketing corporations, the United Coconut Planters International, based in France and the Granex Corp. USA based in San Francisco and New Jersey.

Yorac said that to avoid abuses like those under the Marcos regime, the actual administration of the CIIF companies was separated from the UCPB chair and board.

"We have realized the negative effects of that complete separation and have tried to do something about it by naming the chairman of UCPB to the Oil Mills, Commissioner Ruben Carranza who resigned from the PCGG in July 2004," Yorac said in her letter.

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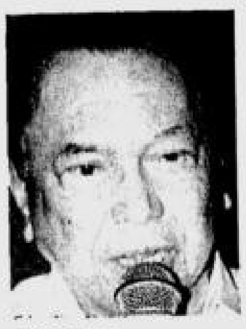
US MEDDLING

Tempers flare in House anti-terrorism hearing

By Philip C. Tubeza



CUENCO

THE HOUSE hearings on the anti-terrorism bill yesterday had to be suspended after some legislators accused the United States Embassy of interfering in the crafting of the proposed law.

"Tempers are flaring and so that we could cool off, the hearing is adjourned," said Rep. Antonio Cuenco, chair of the House foreign affairs committee, which is conducting the hearings jointly with the justice committee.

Tensions rose after Gabriela party-list Rep. Liza Maza demanded an explanation for the reported meeting between a US political officer and the secretariat of the technical working group that consolidated the 10 anti-terror bills.

Lanao del Sur Rep. Benasing Macarambon joined Maza and accused the technical working group of taking dictation from the United States.

"[The anti-terror bill] is not a bill of Congress. This is a bill again emanating from the US....I want to know who are the members of the technical working [group] because we are very suspicious. Maybe [US President George] Bush has a man here," he added.

This drew a strong reaction from Cuenco, the justice committee chair Rep. Simeon Datumanong and Parañaque Rep. Roilo Golez, a former national security adviser.

"This substitute bill is the result of the efforts of the technical working group to which the secretariat was authorized to join by the committee. But the two did not take any dictation from any outside source except their own offices," Datumanong said.

"In other words, it did not come from the US. It did not come from any other source," he said.

The technical working group includes representatives from the National Security Council, the Department of Justice, the Anti-Terrorism Task Force, the National Intelligence Coordinating Council and the Anti-Money Laundering Council.

Maza said a member of her staff had attended a meeting of the technical working group on Feb. 24, where Narcisa Guevarra, the justice committee secretary, had told the group that she had met with a member of the US Embassy on Feb 22.

She said the meeting pertained to certain provisions of the bill, particularly on proscription and membership in terror groups.

The technical working group did not record all the deliberations of the meeting but only took notes of what happened, Macarambon said.

Maza and Macarambon said that the consolidated bill contained provisions that were not in the original 10 bills, hinting that the US might have had a hand in the insertions.

Macarambon said the making of the anti-terror bill could turn out the way of the Anti-Money Laundering Act (AMLA), which he claimed had been written mainly by the controversial US consultancy, Agile, which has been accused of lobbying for the passage of the AMLA.

"The Anti-Money Laundering Law was actually crafted by the Agile, which is clearly a US establishment with the CIA [the US Central Intelligence Agency] or whatever.....How many congressmen or senators were paid on the anti-terror bill to conform to the US?" Macarambon said.

Datumanong said that if there were any provisions which were not found in the original 10 house bills, they "were added for the purpose of making more clear any provision of the bill; to clearly make the measure understood for purpose of enforcement."

"The chair would like to respond to the accusation insinuation that this committee was influenced by any power on earth. We are not going to be influenced by anyone. Your committee on foreign affairs will act on its own for the best interest of the Filipino people. We will not be dictated by anyone," Cuenco said.

With a report from Franco Emman Von Cena

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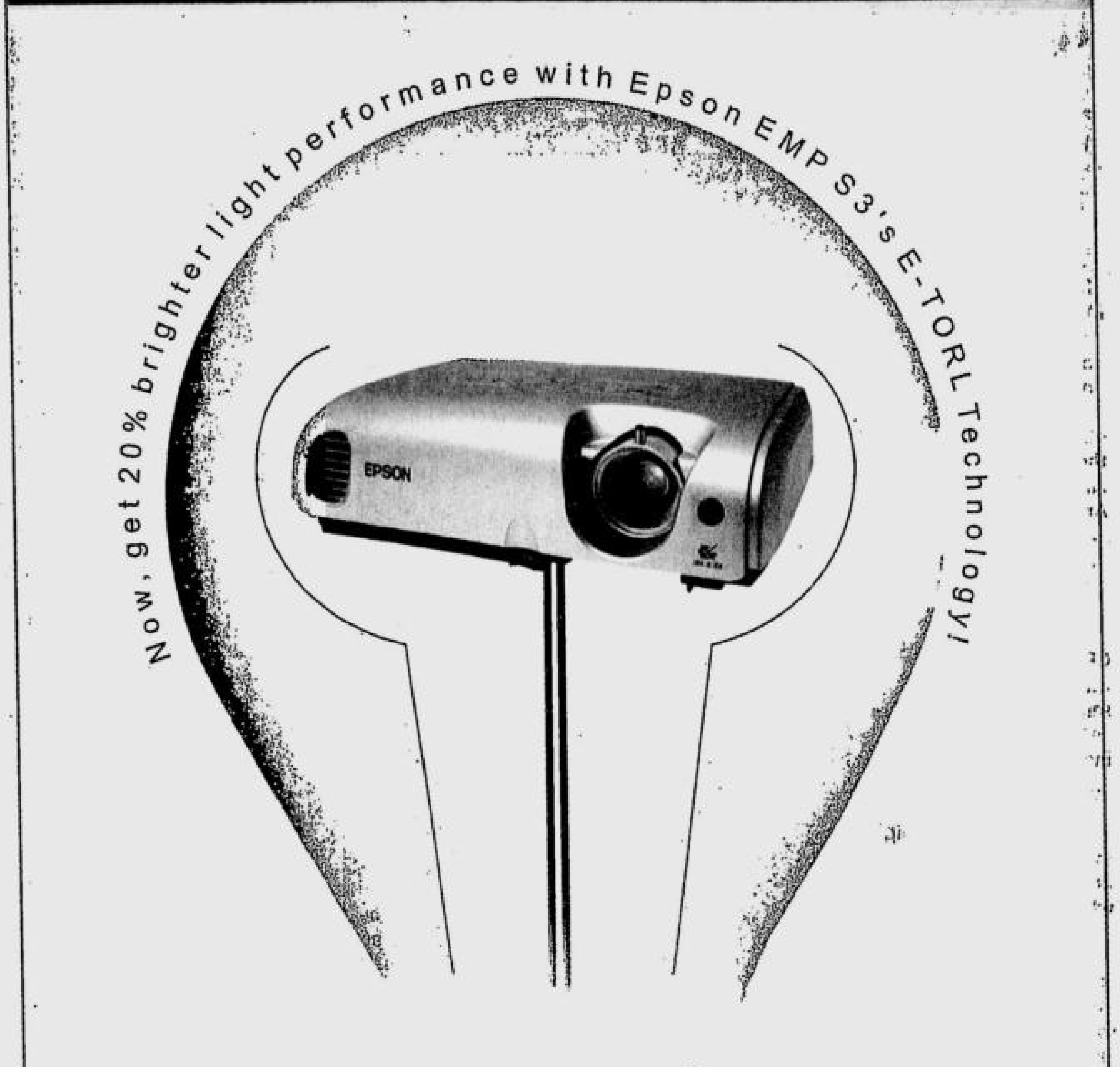
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'COUNTER PRODUCTIVE'

'Know-the-enemy' video showing halted

By Dona Pazzibugan

DUE TO mounting protests, the Armed Forces has indefinitely stopped circulating the controversial "Knowing the Enemy," a briefing document linking some 40 organizations to the communist movement.

Commodore Tirso Danga, deputy chief of staff for intelligence (J2), has ordered the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces (Isafp) to temporarily stop showing the PowerPoint presentation within the military and even to civilian groups as part of the military's campaign against communist insurgents.

The supposed internal briefing document prepared by Isafp named about 40 organizations, including Church and media groups, as communist fronts.

Among those named were the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines and six other Church groups, the National Union of Journalists of the Philippines, the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism, Free Legal Assistance Group, and the IBON Databank.

Seven party-list groups allied with the left-wing Bayan Muna and more than a dozen militant groups under Bayan are also on the list.

"All intelligence officers are directed to cease temporarily the KTE (Knowing the Enemy) advocacy and other related activities, i.e. reproduction and dissemination of KTE CDs/reference materials, until such time that its presentation to other organizations, especially outside the AFP, will have the appropriate clearance/approval by the AFP Chief of Staff (Gen. Efren Abu)," Danga said in an order dated April 15.

Danga told Isafp that the negative public feedback could be "counterproductive" to their anti-insurgency campaign.

"Due to the cropping issues that the AFP has allegedly tagged several organizations as enem(ies) of the state, be reminded of the implications that such development could later be counterproductive with the supposed intent of the AFP to let other organizations be aware of the communist terrorist movement's objective," he said.

AFP public information chief Lt. Col. Buenaventura Pascual said Abu had tasked a committee to review and "refine" the Isafp briefing document.

The committee is headed by Lt. Gen. Edilberto Adan, vice chief of staff.

Pascual said Abu wanted the document to make it clear that the organizations identified in the briefing document were considered targets of communist infiltration.

Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz Jr. had admitted in the past that the document gave the "misimpression" that the military considered Church, media and other groups as communist fronts.

MacArthur highway widening to start soon

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE ROAD widening of the two-lane MacArthur Highway is scheduled to begin in less than two weeks, according to an official of the Department of Public Works and Highways.

DPWH undersecretary Manuel Bonoan said construction work would start on May 16 and was expected to finish in November. The project would provide motorists an alternative to using the North Luzon Expressway, which had raised its toll to 400 percent.

Motorists had started using the MacArthur Highway to save on toll. But the road was too narrow to accommodate the heavy influx of vehicles which resulted in traffic congestion.

Bonoan said the DPWH was in the final stages of evaluating bids for the project. The acquisition of right of way and the removal of obstructions along the highway were 90 percent completed.

"As of now, it's all systems go for the project. We have not received any reports of complaints or cases filed [regarding the undertaking]," Bonoan said.

The P500-million road widening project involves the construction of two additional lanes on the stretch of MacArthur Highway from Meycauayan, Bulacan to San Fernando, Pampanga.

A portion of the highway in Tarlac would also be included in the undertaking, Bonoan added.

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The good news is that lung cancer can be treated successfully. The key is to detect the disease while still in its early stages. This is now possible with Low-Dose CT Lung Cancer Screening, which is available at St. Luke's Medical Center.

Low-Dose CT Lung Cancer Screening involves a quick scan of your chest and lungs to reveal abnormalities not seen using conventional chest x-ray. As its name implies, the procedure is conducted using a low level of CT radiation dose. The screening test effectively detects lung cancer before it can spread to other parts of the body and becomes difficult to treat.

St. Luke's Medical Center is committed to provide patients with the tools that would give them much higher chances of survival. With the Low-Dose CT Lung Cancer Screening, lung cancer would hopefully cease to be the country's main cause of cancer death in the near future.

THE FINE PRINT: Some nodules will require repeat chest CTs over a 2 year period. The detection of abnormalities or nodules may cause considerable anxiety. Further diagnostics or assessments are necessary to determine if the lesions are benign or cancerous. However, the advantage of early detection far outweighs late diagnosis and death.

St. Luke's Medical Center is the only participating member from the Philippines in the International Early Lung Cancer Action Program (I-ELCAP), a worldwide study group led by New York-Presbyterian / Weill Cornell Medical College of Cornell University.

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Detention issue closed, says bank

OFFICIALS of the London-based international bank Standard Chartered Bank (SCB) yesterday disowned the Supreme Court petition to declare their detention by the Senate last March as illegal.

The bank said in a statement that as far as SCB was concerned, the issue of the detention of its key officers was a closed case. It said that their two lawyers, Reynaldo Geronimo and Fernando Arguelles, who were also detained, had sought the Supreme Court ruling on their own.

SCB officials were ordered detained for contempt by senators who felt slighted when an SCB petition referred to the Senate hearings as "in aid of collection." The bank said it had apologized for the phrase, to which Geronimo owned up.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Thursday, May 5, 2005
6th Week of Easter

1st Reading: Acts 18:1-8
Gospel: John 16:16-20

Jesus said to his disciples, "A little while and you will see me no more; and then a little while, and you will see me."

Some of the disciples wondered, "What does he mean by: 'A little while and you will not see me, and then a little while and you will see me?' And why did he say: 'I go to the Father?'" And they said to one another, "What does he mean by 'a little while'? We don't understand."

Jesus knew that they wanted to question him; so he said to them, "You are puzzled because I told you that in a little while you will see me no more, and then a little while later you will see me.

"Truly, I say to you, you will weep and mourn while the world rejoices. You will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will turn to joy."

Commentary

Jesus is trying to wean the disciples away from his physical presence. They cannot imagine life without him, or that there can be a life and a presence that is surer, stronger, more powerful and expressive, loose in the whole world that is his Presence. He is trying to stretch their minds and hearts, their belief to encompass his death and resurrection and his return to the Father, leaving us with his Presence, with his own Spirit, his own breath and life in the Father. They will weep and mourn while others rejoice but the day will come when sorrow will be turned to joy. We must learn continually to let go, no matter how good something appears to be, or an experience of God that touches us—God is always more and the Spirit stretches us beyond our limits, graces us and frees us to believe and know God more than we could ever dream. And joy will be ours.

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SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

REMEDIAL LAW (CIVIL PROCEDURE)—Writ of possession in extrajudicial foreclosure—A writ of possession is generally understood to be an order whereby the sheriff is commanded to place a person in possession of a real and personal property, such as when a property is extrajudicially foreclosed. The issuance of a writ of possession to a purchaser in an extrajudicial foreclosure such as in the case at bar is merely a ministerial function. It is a settled rule that after the consolidation of title in the buyer's name for failure of the mortgagor to redeem, the writ of possession becomes a matter of right. The pendency of an action questioning the validity of a mortgage cannot bar the issuance of the writ of possession after title to the property has been consolidated in the mortgagee. Thus, it follows that at the expiration of the period of redemption, the mortgagee who acquires the property at the foreclosure sale can proceed to have the title consolidated in his name and a writ of possession issued in his favor. (Citations omitted.) (Justice Chico-Nazario, Second Division, Mamerto Maniquiz Foundation, Inc. v. Pizarro, A. M. No. RTJ-03-1750, January 14, 2005) **BY R. B. VERA**

8 of 26 RP beaches flunk test for coliform

By Blanche S. Rivera

THE ENVIRONMENTAL Management Bureau has tested 26 of the country's most popular beaches for fecal and total coliform content to ensure that the water is fit for swimming and diving.

About one-third, or most probably eight of these beaches, did not meet the government's water quality standards, EMB director Julian Amador said. He, however, refused to name the beaches.

Amador said the local governments and resort owners were given six months to improve the water quality in their beaches by following the recommendations of the EMB.

Amador wrote to the local governments of the failing beaches late last year, saying that the results of the water sampling done by the EMB were "not encouraging" and that the local officials must prepare an action plan to address this.

Former Environment Secretary Elisea Gozun, who started the Beach Ecowatch program during her term, said the beaches would be exposed by September if the local governments failed to improve their status.

"We want to make tourism a viable industry; we're not just looking at short-term economic benefits," she said.

"Your selling point is the natural beauty of a given area and part of it is the cleanliness of your water, so we're using this precisely to pressure both the developer and the LGUs to do everything they can to maintain water quality," Gozun, chair of the Earth Day Network, said.

She said only Indonesia, the world's largest archipelago with 17,000 islands, had similar efforts to ensure the water quality of its beaches.

Amador refused to name the 26 beaches that were assessed, but Gozun's Beach Ecowatch program last year identified the world-famous Boracay in Aklan, El Nido in Palawan, Dakak in Zamboanga del Norte, Pagudpud in Ilocos Norte, Puerto Galera in Oriental Mindoro, and Puerto Azul in Cavite as prime bathing areas whose water quality must be tested.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources adheres to the international acceptable fecal coliform content in water for swimming at 200 colonies per 100 ml and total coliform content at 1,000 mpn (most probable number) per 100 ml.

Fecal coliform bacteria are found in the feces of humans and other warm-blooded animals. Total coliform contains bacteria from cold-blooded animals and other soil organisms.

Fecal coliform are not dangerous but they contain bacteria, viruses and parasites that cause diseases and illnesses.

"A person swimming in such waters has a greater chance of getting sick from swallowing disease-causing organisms, or from pathogens entering the body through cuts in the skin, nose, mouth, or the ears," according to the Indiana University-Bloomington water quality test forms.

Waters with high fecal coliform counts can cause typhoid fever, hepatitis, gastroenteritis, dysentery and ear infections.

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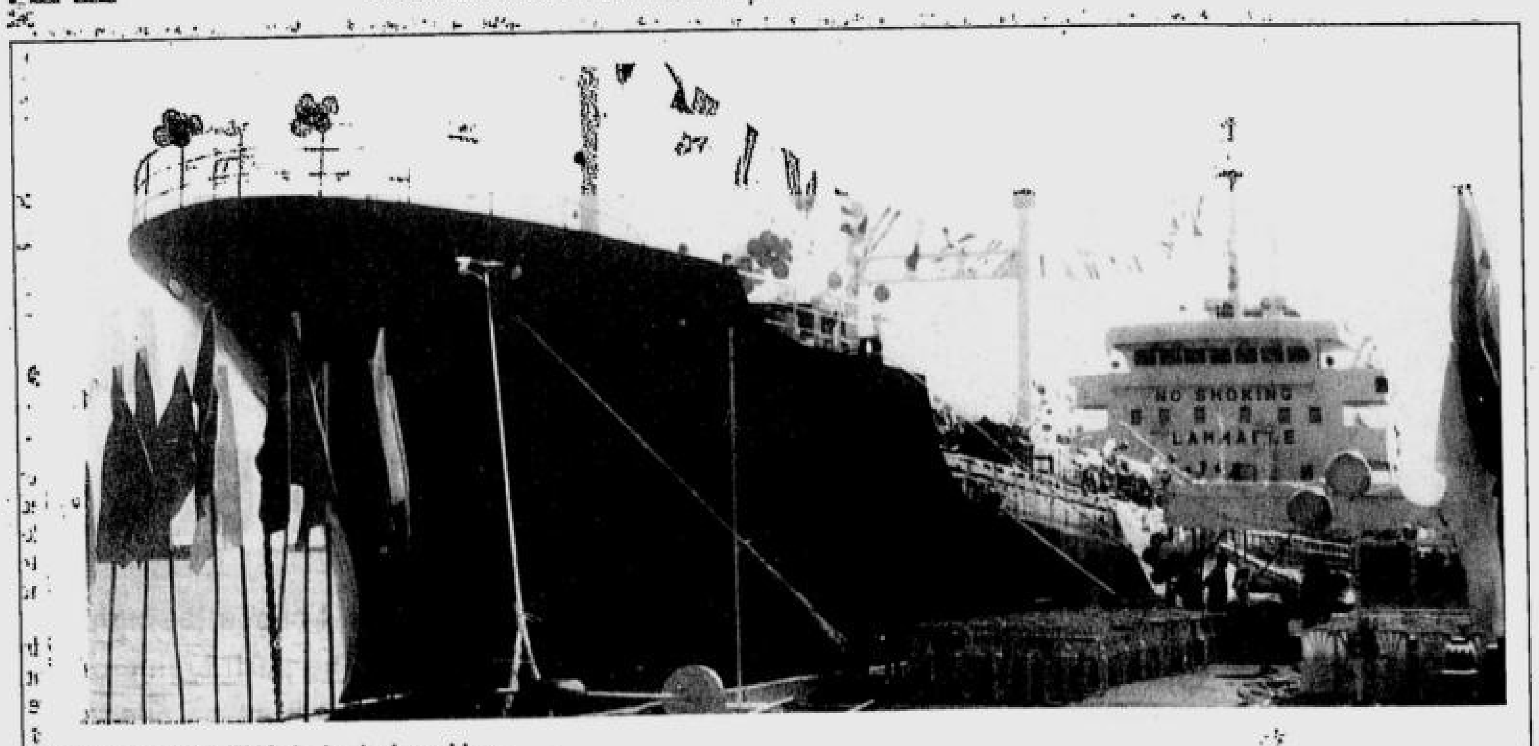

THE DR. JOSE RIZAL during its launching.

RP's youngest oil tanker launched

THE PNOC Shipping and Transport Corp. (PSTC) has acquired the youngest petroleum tanker in the Philippines, the 16-month-old MT Dr. Jose Rizal, which was named, blessed and launched on April 20.

PSTC officials, speaking at the blessing of the ship in the Port of Lamao in Limay, Bataan, said the Dr. Jose Rizal may just be the first Chinese-made multi-product tanker in the country.

At 2,230 tons, the Dr. Jose Rizal was built in Zhejiang, China and is classed by the Korean Register Shipping (KRS).

The PSTC said the vessel, which was built in March 2003, is the company's contributions to the domestic fleet modernization program of the Maritime Industry Authority (Marina).

PSTC has pioneered in bringing the first Korean-made tanker in 2002, a move that led other players in the oil tanker industry to modernize its fleet by purchasing newer vessels.

Encouraged by Petron Corp., its main client, PSTC has been engaged in modernizing its fleet in the past few years by constantly replacing its old ships, leading the industry to upgrade its bottoms.

Philippine National Oil Co. (PNOC) president Eduardo V. Mañalac, PSTC board chair Felix Guanzon and PSTC president Manuel Puey led in the blessing ceremonies.

MT Dr. Jose P. Rizal will be chartered to Petron Corp., the country's biggest petroleum company.

Show up, tax probers tell Goma

By Armand N. Nocum

A DEPARTMENT of Justice official has advised actor Richard Gomez to make a personal appearance at the DOJ as he files this morning his counter-affidavit relative to the P100 million tax evasion case filed against him by the Bureau of Internal Revenue.

"If he will submit his counter affidavit, he has to affirm it personally," Assistant Chief State Prosecutor Richard Anthony Fadullon said of Gomez, one of the first movie personalities charged under the Run After Tax Evaders program of the BIR and the Department of Finance.

According to Fadullon, Gomez can only opt not to appear if he sends his lawyer to ask for an extension of time before which he can submit his counter-affidavit.

"He can ask for an extension and most likely, the prosecution will grant it to him because this is his first time," Fadullon said, adding that the extension can only last for 10 days.

Gomez is to appear before State Prosecutor Perfecto Lawrence Chua Cheng.

In filing a tax evasion case against Gomez, the BIR said the actor has not filed any income tax returns for taxable years 2000 to 2003.

BIR records show that the only transaction he made with the office was the payment of documentary stamp tax for P786,975 on Nov. 6, 2003 for the acquisition of a Forbes Park property for P52 million.

Gomez, the BIR said, had actively pursued his profession as a movie and television actor, model, commercial talent, product endorser, and television host from 2000 to 2003.

Activists under siege: 4 snatched in Quezon

CALAMBA CITY—While militants are calling for the government to act on the recent spate of killings of Left-leaning activists in the country, four persons were reportedly abducted in Calauag, Quezon on May 3.

Luz Baculo, secretary general of Kilusang Mayo Uno-Southern Tagalog, said Leng Jucutan, two unidentified males and a female companion were snatched from the house they had been staying in Barangay Quinalin at about 2 a.m., Tuesday.

Jucutan, she said, is the secretary general of Kadamay-Southern Tagalog, an urban poor organization.

Citing reports from the human rights group Karapatan-Quezon, Baculo said the four were preparing to go to sleep when the unidentified suspects barged inside their quarters.

She said the victims, who were in the area to document the recent illegal demolition of communities located along the railroad, were then taken by the suspects to a vehicle.

She said they suspected that the military based in the area had something to do with the alleged abduction.

Baculo said they were appealing to the military and the police to help them locate the four.

"These people are law-abiding citizens. If the [military] deemed them to be 'enemies of the state,' then they should prove it in the proper forum," she said.

Maj. Jose Broso, Armed Forces 2nd Civil Relations Group commander based in Camp Gen. Nakar in Lucena City, however, said he had not heard of such incident.

"Why do they always point an accusing finger on us every time such kind of event happens? They should first present evidence. Why don't they coordinate with us and we will assist them with their problem?" Broso said.

Shot and wounded

In Eastern Samar, two unidentified men on board a motorcycle shot and wounded an alleged member of Bayan Muna on Tuesday afternoon in Sulat town.

Diosdado L. Abunda, 48 and a technologist at the Department of Agriculture, suffered four bullet wounds in the nape, waist and elbow.

He was first brought to the Borongan provincial hospital but was later transferred to a hospital in Tacloban City, Leyte where the medical facilities were better.

Two Bayan Muna members, who asked not to be named, told the INQUIRER that Abunda was a member of the militant group, a claim strongly denied by his relatives.

If indeed Abunda was a Bayan Muna member, he would be the fourth to be attacked in Eastern Visayas in a span of less than two months.

Like the three other victims, the two unidentified men were also on board a motorcycle when they shot and wounded Abunda in Barangay Sto. Niño.

Police investigation showed that Abunda was driving his XRM Honda Motorcycle on his way home in Barangay Balud in this capital town when the attack happened.

The victim came from work in Can-avid town, about 50 km north of this capital town.

Abunda was first brought to the Sulat police headquarters before he was rushed to the Borongan district hospital.

"Even if the victim could hardly talk when he was brought first to our headquarters, he told us that he was shot at close range by the assailants who were already waiting for him near the bridge," said Insp. Victor Dulliyao, Sulat police chief.

"Actually, the attackers appeared to have been traveling with him all the way from Can-avid and overtook him," he added.

Dulliyao said police investigators found four slugs of a 45-caliber pistol at the crime scene.

He, however, noted that the perpetrators intended to kill Abunda because his cellular phone, watch and wallet were not even touched.

Levy Abunda said her husband had no known enemies. "Even if he was a former soldier, he was a very kind and gentle to everyone," she said. The couple has four children whose ages ranged from 5 to 1 and half years old.

Vehicles torched

In Oras town, also in Eastern Samar, unidentified armed men torched two vehicles of a human rights lawyer early yesterday morning at Barangay Paypayon.

Destroyed were an owner-type jeep and Nissan Ultra Eagle pick up, which were parked at a vacant lot about 15 meters from the home of Pergentino Deri-on, Jr., former provincial vice-chair of the human rights group Katungod.

Deri-on, 39, said he believed that the military was behind the incident especially because he received information that they were after him. *Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau; Joey A. Gabieta and Cyrain Cabuenas, PDI Visayas Bureau*

KIDNAPPING?

Customs broker, 2 others missing

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE FAMILY of a customs broker, who mysteriously disappeared along with her niece and a driver almost a month ago 8, yesterday appealed to the public to provide them with any information about the three.

Dolora Agbulos, 54; her niece Salvacion, 15; and driver Jovel Ytac have been missing since April 8. The last time their relatives heard from them, they were on board a maroon Honda CRV (YFM-888), according to Agbulos' sister Lydia.

Lydia said her niece Salvacion even texted her, asking if she would be visiting them in Tagaytay the next day. Lydia said she replied to Salvacion, but the teenager did not acknowledge it.

Lydia said she tried to call her niece a few hours later but the cellular phone had been turned off. They did not go home either to Tagaytay or to Sta. Rosa, Laguna.

Agbulos' siblings said they had reported the disappearance to the Presidential Anti-Crime Emergency Response and to the National Anti-Kidnapping Task Force.

Yesterday, Lydia, sister Cristina and brothers Enrique and Joaquin asked the public to help them locate Agbulos.

"Please help us look for them. We are very worried about their condition, especially about Dolor's health," Lydia said.

Agbulos wears a pacemaker and has had kidney operation, according to Lydia.

Salvacion's mother Carlota wept as she asked for help in finding her daughter, who had been in Agbulos' care since she was a baby.

"I had not been with my daughter for a long time and now she has disappeared," Carlota said.

Kidnapped for ransom?

Lydia told reporters yesterday that she could not believe that Agbulos and Salvacion had been kidnapped, even though Agbulos' husband of six years, Tagaytay City police inspector Edgardo Quimio, had told them that he had received a ransom demand from the driver.

Lydia said Quimio had reported to them that Ytac called him in the evening of April 9, a day after the three disappeared.

Quimio told the family that an angry Ytac had said that Agbulos was with him and demanded that they produce P5 million in two hours or else he would kill the broker. Lydia said Quimio had even invited her and Cristina to Tiaong, Quezon, where the ransom money was supposed to be delivered.

The driver also allegedly told Agbulos' husband that he should not report the matter to the police.

But Agbulos' siblings were skeptical.

"Jovel knows Quimio is a policeman. Why would he tell us not to talk to the police when he was already talking to a policeman?" Cristina said.

She added that Ytac was a very trustworthy man who had proven himself to be a very loyal employee for several years.

"He handled big amounts of money and jewelry for Dolora several times without anything bad taking place. Also, my sister always got to her destination safely with Jovel," Cristina said.

The INQUIRER called Quimio on his cell phone yesterday, but his aide who picked up the phone said he had gone out.

Lawyer Hilda Clave told reporters that based on the statements of Agbulos' family, the disappearances were unlikely a case of kidnap for ransom.

"If this is a KFR (kidnap for ransom) incident, the kidnapper would not have given just a two-hour deadline. He would have asked to negotiate with the family first," she said.

Clave said Agbulos was a wealthy woman. Besides DEA Brokerage Corporation, she also owns a security agency.

According to Clave, the family has turned over to police documents pertaining to her properties and bank accounts to help determine who would be interested in making Agbulos disappear.

Ople lecture on writing tomorrow

THE BLAS F. Ople Policy Center and Training Institute will hold the second of its lecture series on the subject, "On Writing Well," at the Marbella 2/F Building on Roxas Boulevard tomorrow.

The workshop seeks to promote interest and competence of young and old aspiring writers in both fiction and non-fiction. Topics for discussion are on creative writing, editorial writing, column writing and news writing.

The Ople Institute has lined up outstanding writers and veteran journalists as resource persons.

Prof. Vim Nadera, Palanca awardee and director of the UP Institute of Creative Writing, will deliver a lecture and conduct a workshop on Creative Writing.

Fred de la Rosa, publisher and editor in chief of The Manila Times, will lecture on editorial writing.

Lito Malinao, journalism professor at the Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila and author of two books on Journalism for Filipinos, will speak on "theories and techniques of news writing."

Fred Rosario, veteran columnist and former opinion editor of The Manila Times, will talk on "effective column writing."

The first workshop on the subject, "On Writing Well," has stirred such a wide interest among aspiring writers, prompting the Ople Institute to hold a second round.

Former Bulacan Vice Governor Bernardo F. Ople, senior vice president of the Ople Institute, said interested seminar participants should make early reservations for available slots with Ms Millet Jose or Ms Lyn Soriaga at telephones 339-1768 or 339-1769.

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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

At least 50 killed in Iraq suicide attack...

BAGHDAD—In the deadliest insurgent attack in Iraq in more than two months, an Iraqi carrying hidden explosives entered a police recruitment center and set them off Wednesday, police said. At least 50 Iraqis were killed, according to the US military.

State-owned TV in Iraq and Al-Arabiya television gave even higher casualty figures, saying 60 were killed and as many as 150 wounded.

The attack occurred in Irbil, a Kurdish city 350 km north of Baghdad, as many civilians were applying for Iraqi police jobs at the recruitment center, said Capt. Mark Walter, the spokesman who provided the US military death toll.

Local police officer Shwan Mohammed said it wasn't immediately clear where the suicide bomber had hidden the explosives, under his clothing or in something he was carrying.

The attack appeared to be the deadliest by insurgents in Iraq since Feb. 28, when a suicide car bomber struck a crowd of police and national guard recruits outside a medical clinic in Hillah, south of the capital. That attack, which killed 110 people and wounded 133, was the single deadliest-ever in the insurgency.

Militants have stepped up their attacks across Iraq in the last week, often targeting convoys of US and Iraqi troops, and Iraqi police on patrol or at recruitment centers.

A key goal of US troops is to eventually train enough Iraqi security forces to reduce the role now being played by the Americans in fighting the insurgency.

Elsewhere, the US military said Wednesday that two American soldiers had been killed in separate roadside bomb attacks in Baghdad the day before. Those explosions raised the death toll from a week of insurgent-related violence in Iraq to nearly 160.

Little information was immediately available about the attacks on those two US military convoys, as American forces took time to notify the victims' relatives.

As of Tuesday, at least 1,585 members of the US military have died since the beginning of the Iraq war in March 2003, according to an Associated Press count. At least 1,211 died as a result of hostile action, according to the US defense department.

On Tuesday, the new Shiite prime minister pledged before a half-empty parliament that he would unite the country's rival ethnic factions and fight terrorism.

Still, despite months of tortuous negotiations, there was no final decision on seven positions in the 37-member Cabinet, including the key oil and defense ministries.

More important, the partial Cabinet fails to give the country's disaffected Sunni Arab minority, believed to be driving the insurgency, a meaningful governing stake.

On Wednesday, Prime Minister Ibrahim al-Jaafari resumed months of behind-the-scenes talks aimed at resolving the dispute among Sunnis and Shiites over the outstanding Cabinet portfolios.

During Tuesday's swearing in ceremony of the new government, many lawmakers skipped the ceremony, which took place in a conference hall deep within Baghdad's heavily fortified Green Zone. Those absent included the government's most senior Sunni member, Vice President Ghazi al-Yawer. *AP*

... As partial Iraqi Cabinet sworn in

BAGHDAD—Iraq's first democratically elected government in half a century has been sworn into office, but its line-up remained incomplete as wrangling continued over the attribution of key portfolios to the minority Sunni Arabs.

The swearing in of a new Cabinet on Tuesday, seen as a crucial step in Iraq's rocky transition, marked the first time in 1,000 years an Arab country was governed by Shiite Muslims but came against the backdrop of further bloodshed.

"Iraq has witnessed a new step today which can be considered as a turning point in its political process," Prime Minister Ibrahim Jaafari told reporters after a ceremony held under tight security in Baghdad's fortified Green Zone.

A full Cabinet was expected to have been sworn in Tuesday, five days after parliament only approved a partial line-up, with the portfolios to be handed to Sunni Arabs the main stumbling block.

Jaafari said the delay had been caused by differences within the former ruling minority over the post of defense minister.

"There are differences among our Sunni Arab brothers and we did not want to rush the matter for the choice to be satisfactory and acceptable to all Iraqis, especially the Sunnis," he said.

Jaafari explained that several candidates were being considered for the defense post and predicted that Sunni Arabs would agree on a name "in two or three days."

Vice President Ghazi al-Yawar, a Sunni tribal leader, boycotted the swearing-in ceremony in protest, said his secretary, Ahmed Najadi. Yawar heads a committee that put forward a Sunni Cabinet slate for several key posts.

"Formation of the government is very important, but we said if the candidates from the Sunni side were not approved, we will not participate in the swearing-in," Najadi said. "Either all of the Sunni ministers go together, or they don't go."

The sticking point is finding an acceptable defense minister, said a Sunni involved in choosing the slate, declining to be named.

"We gave them three names for defense minister, and they didn't accept any of the three," the source said. "They said if they selected anyone from our list, that candidate would have a relationship to people who carry weapons in Iraq." *AFP*

US spy ordered to bring Bin Laden's head on dry ice

WASHINGTON—US spy chiefs ordered agents to deliver Osama bin Laden's severed head in a box of dry ice and hoist heads of other al-Qaida leaders on pikes, a retired field officer has disclosed.

As America reeled in shock days after the Sept. 11 attacks in 2001, former CIA officer Gary Schroen was sent to Afghanistan to help the opposition Northern Alliance to topple Bin Laden's hosts the Taliban.

He told National Public Radio (NPR) in an interview broadcast on Monday and Tuesday that he stopped by the office of then Director of the CIA counter-terrorism center Cofer Black for final instructions.

He was told: "'Your basic marching orders are to link up with the Northern Alliance and get their cooperation military and they will take on the Taliban.

"'When we break the Taliban, your job is to capture Bin Laden, kill him and bring his head back in a box full of dry ice.'"

Schroen was also ordered to kill other al-Qaida leaders suspected in the plot which saw terrorists slam planes into the New York's World Trade Center and the Pentagon killing nearly 3,000 people.

It was the first time in 30 years with the CIA he been ordered to set out to kill a target rather than try to bring them in alive, Schroen told NPR's station's Morning Edition program.

He said he told Black, "'Sir, those are the clearest orders I have ever received, I can certainly make pikes out in the field but I don't know what I'll do about dry ice to bring the head back but we will manage something.'" *AFP*

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Jackson in deep financial trouble, says witness

SANTA MARIA, Calif.—Michael Jackson owed more than $230 million and was spending his way deeper into debt at the time he is accused of molesting a 13-year-old boy at his Neverland estate, a forensic accountant hired by prosecutors said on Tuesday.

Jackson faced a financial crisis that caused panic in his camp in early 2003 just after a damaging TV documentary showed him cuddling with his accuser and defending his practice of sharing his bed with children, prosecutors said.

The testimony by accountant John Duross O'Bryan was the most direct look at what prosecutors claim are the dire finances of the 46-year-old entertainer, who borrowed heavily against his ownership stake in a catalog of Beatles' hits.

"Mr. Jackson's financial condition was deteriorating up to (February of 2003)," O'Bryan said. "Expenditures were exceeding income, liabilities were increasing and there was a liquidity crisis."

Prosecutors are trying to convince jurors that Jackson's deteriorating finances gave him a motive for imprisoning his accuser's family and pressing them to tape an interview that praised him in a bid to salvage his public image.

Jackson, who has pleaded not guilty, faces more than 20 years in prison if convicted of all 10 charges against him.

O'Bryan, who pored over Jackson's financial records, said the entertainer was more than $230 million in debt in February 2003. At the time, he said, Jackson was spending $20 million to $30 million more than he was bringing in per year.

His lavish lifestyle was made possible in part by a $200 million loan from Bank of America secured by Jackson's stake in a valuable music catalog that included Beatles songs. Jackson owns the music in a joint venture with Japan's Sony Corp. known as Sony/ATV.

A second $70-million loan from Bank of America was secured by Jackson's stake in his own music catalog, O'Bryan said.

A balance sheet at end-June 2002 showed Jackson with a negative net worth of $285 million, O'Bryan said.

Even before that, Jackson's accountants had been cautioning that his spending habits were endangering his hold on one of his most valuable assets, his stake in the Sony catalog.

A memo in 2000 showed Jackson had income of $11.5 million in the prior year but that was swamped by more than $20 million in expenses, including $5 million for legal costs and other services, $5 million to run Neverland and $7.5 million of personal spending, O'Bryan said.

On cross-examination, lead defense lawyer Tom Mesereau suggested Jackson could easily have solved his "liquidity crisis" by selling his stake in the Beatles' catalog. *Reuters*

IMPORTANT
To the Devotees of the SACRED HEART OF JESUS, Tomorrow, May 6, 2005, will be the FIRST FRIDAY of the month. Novenas to the SACRED HEART OF JESUS and to ST. ANTHONY are given away FREE. Please get them from Jasmine at the Santuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park, Makati City or from Beny at 170 Salcedo St. Legaspi Village, Makati City.

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TO PACIFIC PLANS TRADITIONAL EDUCATIONAL PLANHOLDERS

Amidst all the issues raised on Pacific Plans, Inc. (PPI), there is only one thing that the company wants its planholders to understand – that PPI has, since 1990, done everything in its capacity to honor its obligations to, and protect the interest of its planholders.

Let's take a second, hard look at what PPI has done for its planholders:

1. **PPI had reacted prudently.** It stopped selling open-ended plans in 1992 to contain a problematic situation with respect to servicing future claims. Had it not done so, the problem would have affected more planholders.
2. **PPI continued to honor its obligations despite legal cover.** A provision in the planholder's contract provides PPI an option to pay only termination values as a result of a change in government regulation (e.g. removal of cap on tuition fee increase) and fortuitous events.
3. **PPI put in an additional P1.5 billion over the years to pay the runaway tuition.** It continued to pay in full in the past 14 years all tuition obligation to its 56,000 scholars. To date, 18,000 of its planholders are yet to avail of the scholarships – a modest number by industry standards mainly because of action No. 1.
4. **PPI instead, sold fixed-value plans whose benefits are defined.** After having sold more than 400,000 fixed-value plans, PPI deemed it necessary to separate these from the 34,000 open-ended plans through a spin-off, a perfectly legal action done all over the world. The shareholders did not benefit from this spin-off. Without this, the whole body of fixed-value and open-ended plans would have suffered.
5. **PPI offered to various schools an advance tuition payment for four-to-five-year courses of thousands of scholars to ensure their uninterrupted schooling.** Despite PPI's pleas, not one school agreed to its offer of a 10% annual tuition fee increase.
6. **PPI offered to buy back plans.** But the secondary market, which it has no control of, has brought prices to unreasonable levels.
7. **PPI had sought ways to limit its liability on its remaining 34,000 open-ended plans by proposing to swap these with fixed-value plans.** While PPI had more than P300 million cash left, servicing the requirements of its 16,000 availing planholders and liquidating its $52 million worth of government-guaranteed bonds now would put the majority or 18,000 remaining planholders in peril.
8. **After exhausting all measures available to address its financial difficulties, PPI filed for a rehabilitation plan last month.** While it sought for suspension of payment, it asked the court to allow it to use its remaining P341 million in cash to provide tuition support to its 16,000 availing planholders.
9. **PPI proposed to return all premium payment plus 7% net compounded interest to the 18,000 non-availing planholders.** For the 16,000 who are already availing themselves of the benefits, PPI offered tuition support which is treated as an advance against the total value of their fixed-value plans.
10. **PPI is now hopeful the court would uphold the merits of its rehabilitation plan.** Should opposing parties succeed in blocking the rehabilitation, PPI would likely be forced to "square one" with all the problems and no solution, including the pre-termination of its $52-million government-guaranteed bonds. If sold now, these bonds would fetch P550 million less than if they are redeemed by 2010. This loss, PPI fears, would be ultimately absorbed by planholders.

All told, PPI has gone way beyond the call of obligation, legal and moral, to its planholders. When the time comes that it has overcome its present hurdles, PPI intends to be remembered as the company that offered to return the planholders' money plus more while it still could, and still took a lot of beating for a misunderstood but correct decision.

ABDUL

CLARK

Ex-'American Idol' singer claims affair with Paula Abdul

LOS ANGELES—An ABC News special on competitor Fox's hit series "American Idol" will report a former contestant's claim that he had a sexual relationship with judge Paula Abdul while on the talent show, ABC News said.

Corey Clark, who Fox has said was dropped from "American Idol" in 2003 for failing to reveal a past arrest, told "Primetime Live" that Abdul helped him with advice and money.

The hourlong special is set to air Wednesday, after the "American Idol" results show airs. The Fox show is nearing its May 24-25 finale in which a winner will be chosen and get a record deal.

Clark earlier made allegations about Abdul in an interview with the Globe tabloid, which reported that he was shopping a tell-all book.

In a statement to ABC News on Tuesday, Fox said Clark never notified the network or "American Idol" producers of any concerns about the show despite "multiple opportunities" for contestants to do so.

Legal action

Dancer-singer Abdul, known for her upbeat critiques of even the most hopeless contestants, has punched back at Clark and ABC. Her lawyer sent a letter to the network threatening legal action if the special airs.

"Mr. Clark is an admitted liar and opportunist who engages in unlawful activities. He is communicating lies about Paula Abdul in order to generate interest in a book deal," said an earlier statement issued on her behalf.

Clark was arrested after a scuffle with his sister and eventually pleaded no contest to a misdemeanor charge, ABC said.

According to ABC News, Clark claims that singer-dancer Abdul, now 42, initiated the relationship when he was 22, which started as a friendship but then became sexual.

No media

The special reports Clark's allegation that Abdul "implored him not to talk about her to the media or publish his memoirs," ABC said, noting that Clark played one answering machine message for "Primetime Live." The contents of that message were not detailed in the ABC News statement.

Clark alleges his first private phone call with Abdul came after an associate of hers slipped Clark a piece of paper with her number.

"So she was like, 'You got to have better song choices, and I want to help you do that. I want to look out after you, like 'I'm your mom,'" Clark told "Primetime Live," according to an excerpt released by ABC News.

"And then she was like, "Well, more like your sister." And I was like, 'OK, cool, cool'... And then she was like, "Well, maybe more like your special friend,'" Clark told the news show. *AP*

Sharon-Abbas honeymoon over; relations deteriorating

JERUSALEM—The honeymoon between Ariel Sharon and Mahmud Abbas is well and truly over, with the Israeli premier accusing his Palestinian counterpart of failing to lift a finger against militants and freezing plans to transfer responsibility for security in the West Bank.

In response, Abbas said Israel's position showed that the Jewish state "wants Palestinian blood to flow."

Nearly three months after their landmark meeting in Egypt, relations between the two men are steadily deteriorating, with both sides accusing each other of reneging on their agreements at the Sharm el-Sheikh summit.

In a meeting with two influential US senators on Monday, Sharon delivered his harshest judgment to date on the performance of Abbas who was elected as successor to the Israeli premier's arch enemy, Yasser Arafat, in January.

"Instead of disbanding the terrorist organizations, he is acting to strengthen them," Sharon told Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist and former vice presidential candidate Joe Lieberman.

"He is not willing to fight them and is similarly unwilling to disband their infrastructures. While Abu Mazen (Abbas) is taking steps to maintain the quiet, he is completely avoiding taking significant steps to fight the terrorist organizations."

But Frist praised Abbas Tuesday as a tremendous leader, describing him as a "bold leader" whom the United States encouraged to continue to lead "as we proceed along the roadmap."

"He has shown tremendous leadership," said Frist, reading a statement to reporters in the West Bank city of Ramallah.

During hour-long talks with Abbas on Monday, the senator said he "commended the president for his strong leadership, for his commitment to the Palestinian people and to his commitment to reforms," both economic and security.

SHARON

ABBAS

At Sharm el-Sheikh the Israelis agreed to hand over responsibility for security in five West Bank towns. However, the transfer has so far taken place in just two—Jericho and Tulkarem.

Israeli Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz said Tuesday that there would be no further transfers until the Palestinian Authority disarmed wanted militants.

"Terrorism continues," the minister said, highlighting the fatal shooting of an Israeli soldier on Monday during an arrest operation in the northern West Bank, in which a wanted Islamic Jihad militant was also killed.

The Jihad militant, suspected of masterminding a suicide bombing in Tel Aviv after the Sharm el-Sheikh summit, had been arrested and detained in a Palestinian prison but somehow escaped last month.

Israel had said it would hold off its pursuit of wanted militants but the arrest operation for a man, who security sources admit was not regarded as an immediate threat, showed the agreement is petering out.

Another feature of the Sharm el-Sheikh summit was an agreement for the early release of 900 Palestinians being held in Israeli prisons. Although 500 were freed in the summit's immediate aftermath, the other 400 are still behind bars.

A report in Tuesday's edition of Israeli daily Maariv said more than 400 Palestinians had been arrested in the past three months, although many were later released. *AFP*

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- Most Memorable Wedding Photo Contest MAY 04 to 17, 2005 Exhibit at the Cinema Lobby - Robinsons Movieworld BACOLOD & ILOILO
- Wedding Date Dating Game Show MAY 07 (Saturday) Fountain Area - Robinsons Place BACOLOD
- The Wedding Date Special Advance Screening MAY 09 (Monday) Robinsons Movieworld BACOLOD MAY 10 (Tuesday) Robinsons Movieworld ILOILO
- Judging of Photo Contest - Cinema Lobby • 7:00 PM
- Special Advance Screening - Cinema 1 • 7:30 PM

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Somali PM unhurt as bomb blast kills 15

MOGADISHU—At least 15 people were killed and nearly 40 wounded Tuesday in a bomb blast at a Mogadishu stadium where Somalia's transitional prime minister was addressing a large crowd, police and hospital officials said.

Prime Minister Ali Mohamed Gedi, on his first visit to the capital itself since taking office last year, was unhurt by the explosion that occurred just about eight meters from where he was speaking, they said.

Officials close to Gedi said the bomb, initially reported to have been a grenade, detonated while in the possession of a bodyguard for a senior local militia commander but it was unclear if it had been intentional.

The bodyguard was among those killed in the blast but the officials said they could not immediately determine whether the prime minister had been the target of a suicide bombing or even an assassination attempt.

But diplomatic sources said Tuesday's deadly blast was the result of an apparent failed attempt to assassinate transitional Somali Prime Minister Ali Mohamed Gedi.

The sources said the explosion was not an accident and occurred when Gedi's security guards stopped an unidentified militiaman from throwing a hand grenade when the prime minister was delivering a speech.

"A man had taken out a grenade but was immediately restrained by nearby militiamen," the source said. "He died in the explosion."

Gedi appeared to want to keep speaking after the explosion but was whisked away from the site by his security team, according to an AFP correspondent on the scene.

Several thousand Somalis who were listening to the speech fled the stadium in panic as the dead and wounded, several of whom suffered serious injuries, were taken to local hospitals, police and witnesses said.

Abdi Hassan, a senior Mogadishu police official, told AFP that at least eight people had died in the blast and that several of the wounded had been seriously injured.

"At least eight of them are in very critical condition," he said.

Nurses in Mogadishu's Medina and Al-hayat hospitals said seven more died, bringing the toll to 15.

"Three more people died here while they were undergoing treatment while four others are in a critical condition," a nurse at Medina hospital told AFP.

At the nearby Al-Hayat clinic, four other people succumbed to internal injuries and bleeding, a medical official said. They said at least 38 people had been treated in the hospitals with fairly serious wounds.

At the stadium, shoes and other personal effects were left scattered about the stadium in the aftermath of the explosion, witnesses said.

The blast occurred on the fourth day of Gedi's maiden tour of the capital aimed at building support for his government and ending a bitter dispute over when and where in Somalia it should relocate from exile in Kenya.

Shortly after the explosion, Gedi vowed that the attack would not dampen his resolve to secure a lasting peace in the war-shattered Horn of Africa nation which has been without a functioning central government for 14 years.

"Our determination to achieve peace will not be overshadowed by incidents of violence like this one," he told reporters at a hastily arranged news conference.

Moments before the explosion, Gedi had told the crowd at the stadium that he was willing to drop controversial plans to move the government to the town of Baidoa or Jowhar if security in Mogadishu was enhanced.

"We will relocate to Mogadishu if security improves," he said. "The security situation is the most important thing."

Since arriving on Friday with a team of African Union and Arab League diplomats, Gedi has held talks with at least 70 Somali lawmakers, ministers and warlords who have been trying to agree on how to pacify the some 15,000 heavily armed militia fighters who rule the capital. *AFP*

INJURED or dead people are seen in the st stadium where Somalia's Prime Minister A

VICTORY CELEBRATION
Municipal workers create a giant poster for the next month's celebrations marking the 60th anniversary of the Allies' World War II victory in Europe. AP

Iran refuses to abandon nuke program

UNITED NATIONS—Iran is determined to carry out uranium enrichment and will not abandon such nuclear fuel work as a guarantee it is not making nuclear weapons, Iranian Foreign Minister Kamal Kharazi said Tuesday.

"Iran for its part is determined to pursue all legal areas of nuclear technology, including enrichment exclusively for peaceful purposes," Kharazi told a non-proliferation conference at the United Nations.

German Foreign Minister Joschka Fischer warned here Monday that resumption of any enrichment activities by Iran "would lead to a collapse of the talks" with the European Union on getting Iran to give guarantees it is not making atom bombs.

Fischer said a breakdown in negotiations would also lead to a push by Europe and the United States to take Iran before the UN Security Council for possible international sanctions.

But Kharazi said: "No one should be under the illusion that objective guarantees can theoretically or practically amount to cessation or even long-term suspension of legal activity" such as enrichment, which Iran claims is allowed for peaceful purposes under the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

In Tehran, foreign ministry spokesperson Hamid Reza Asefi said Tuesday that Iran would resume some nuclear activities suspended as part of a deal with the European Union, despite the threat of international sanctions.

Iran agreed in November last year to suspend its fuel cycle work—the focus of international fears it may be seeking the atomic bomb—and open talks with EU negotiators Britain, France and Germany.

But the clerical regime has since voiced frustration over the negotiations, in which the European trio is offering trade, security and technology incentives in return for "objective guarantees" from Iran that it will not develop nuclear weapons.

Kharazi said, however, that "cessation of legal activity is no objective guarantee against so-called break-out (capability to make nuclear weapons). It is indeed a historically tested recipe for one."

He said that Iran has done and will in the future do its enrichment work "under the fullest and most intrusive IAEA supervision," referring to the Vienna-based International Atomic Energy Agency which verifies international nuclear safeguards.

Kharazi also took clear aim at US comments made Monday when he said: "It is unacceptable that some tend to limit the access to peaceful nuclear technology to an exclusive club of technologically advanced states under the pretext of non-proliferation." US Assistant Secretary of State for arms control Stephen Rademaker targeted Iran on Monday, saying that, in line with the NPT, states not in compliance with nuclear safeguards should not get assistance in developing peaceful atomic technology. *AFP*

Philips Consumer Electronics: Europe's No. 1 and one of the Philippines' most awarded electronics companies.

Philips Consumer Electronics continues to assert its dominance in the consumer electronics industry, thanks to the popular support and recognition of its customers and industry experts and the unwavering commitment of its personnel.

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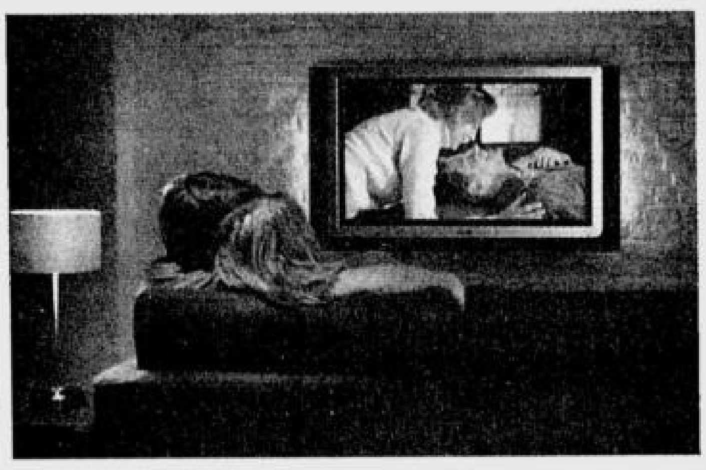

The multi-awarded Philips Pixel Plus 2 TV with Ambilight.

Most Outstanding Brand in Television Award

Philips recently garnered the **Most Outstanding Brand in Television Award** during the **2005 National Consumers Excellence Awards** given by the **Parangal ng Bayan Foundation, Inc.**

The **Parangal ng Bayan Foundation, Inc.** is the country's biggest organization which gives due recognition to ***outstanding Filipinos*** and ***world-class achievers*** from various fields of endeavor and ***excellent manufacturers, products & services*** that contribute to the economic progress of the country. The awarding event commemorates the *National Achiever's Month Celebration* every March.

The National Consumers Excellence Awards, Superbrands International, and the Annual National Consumers Awards: three citations that mark Philips' brand of product excellence.

Philips Consumer Electronics Product Mgr. for Connected Displays Mark Sta. Maria receives the best brand award from Associate Justice Cancio Garcia (left) and Sis. Vicky Dizon during the National Consumers Excellence Awards night.

The National Consumers Excellence Awards determines the highest quality of every product or service offered and their contributions to the well-being of the Philippine market.

"This significant citation, among all our other awards in the past years, solidly affirms the high market regard we've been getting from our consumers. This motivates us to continually offer innovations in TV technology and design to enhance the entire home entertainment experience," says Angelo Valenton, General Manager, Philips Consumer Electronics.

Among the pioneering innovations Philips has introduced include the Flat and Slim Plasma and LCD TV that gives unique, space-saving elegance, the Pixel Plus 2 technology that creates vivid colors and breathtaking contrasts, and the Ambilight™ ambient lighting that enhances the TV and the viewing environment.

Philips : A Superbrand!

Philips has also been included in the **Superbrands** list for the year 2004 in the local market. Launched in England in 1991, Superbrands is the world's leading arbiter of brand performance, operating in 30 markets worldwide.

Philips was selected over other brands after it convincingly passed a two-stage evaluation process that included research into 1,000 consumer preferences in markets and a qualitative evaluation of consumers' preferred brands. Other criteria were market dominance, longevity, goodwill, customer loyalty, and overall market acceptance.

A rich legacy of inventions and innovations in relation to the processing, storage, and transmission of images, sound and data propelled the brand to the top of consumer preference and ultimately to Superbrands status. The Laser Vision optical disc, the Compact Disc, and the Digital Versatile Disc are just a few of its numerous inventions, earning Philips the title "King of DVD."

Worldwide, Royal Philips Electronics of the Netherlands holds close to 100,000 of the world's patents in inventions and this figure is growing, thanks to the company's extensive investments in research and development.

Philips Consumer Electronics Gen. Mgr. Angelo Valenton (right) with Superbrands Phils. Gen. Mgr. Karl McKlean.

Outstanding Home Video Entertainment System

For its significant innovations in the area of home entertainment, Philips also garnered the **Outstanding Home Video Entertainment System Award** during the recent 15th Annual National Consumers Award (ANCA).

The Philips Home Entertainment System that bagged the award is comprised of the Pixel Plus Plasma TV, DVD player and Home Theater Speaker System.

The ANCA is conducted to honor public and private firms that have served well through quality consumer services and excellent product lines in the country. Selection is conducted through product testing and extensive consumer survey participated by members of the Consumers Union of the Philippines. The CUP is a non-profit organization that aims to encourage manufacturers and distributors of consumer products to render the best services, deliver high-quality products and protect consumers from all forms of unfair trade practices.

15TH ANNUAL ATION
CONSUMERS AWAR

Philips Consumer Electronics Product Mgr. for Home Entertainment Ria Nuñez and Product Mgr. for Connected Displays Mark Sta. Maria at the 15th Annual National Consumer Awards.

With these accolades tucked in its belt, Philips will continually work hard to produce even more innovations designed to attain and retain the highest reward of all—the satisfaction of consumers.

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dium of Mogadishu May 3 in this image taken from television after an explosion ripped through the soccer
i Mohamed Gedi (right) was speaking to supporters during a rally. AP

Blair extends lead on final day

LONDON—Prime Minister Tony Blair has emerged unscathed from renewed attacks over Iraq to stay on course to win a historic third consecutive term in power as the campaign entered its final day on Wednesday.

With political leaders poised for a final flurry of campaigning to sway undecided voters before Thursday's election, Blair held a commanding 14-point lead over his nearest rival in one newspaper poll.

The Populus survey for the Times newspaper put Blair's ruling Labor Party unchanged on 41 percent, with the main opposition Conservatives down two on 27. The Liberal Democrats gained two points to 23 percent.

If repeated on May 5, that result would return Labor to power with a large majority and make Blair the first leader in the party's history to win three terms in a row.

BLAIR

After 10 days of campaigning, the center-left Labor Party will urge voters on Wednesday to stop focusing on the Iraq war and questions surrounding Blair's integrity and concentrate Britain's buoyant economy.

"There are real consequences to a protest vote that risks inadvertently returning the Conservatives to power," Blair's finance minister Gordon Brown wrote in the Guardian newspaper.

"(It) could lead to a regressive government."

Michael Howard, who supported the war as leader of the right-wing Conservatives, will respond with a call for voters to oust a "failing" government, the BBC reported on its website (www.bbc.co.uk/news).

Howard has accused Blair of lying over the advice he received from the government's top lawyer on the legality of the invasion of Iraq. Families of British soldiers killed in Iraq said on Tuesday they plan to launch an attempt to take Blair to court, accusing him of deception.

Blair, Washington's staunchest ally in the 2003 invasion to remove former Iraqi President Saddam Hussein from power, has repeatedly defended his actions, saying the world is now safer. *Reuters*

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Even viewing digital photos is a snap. Philips DVD players can read JPEG files in Picture CDs without compromising quality, and can even play videos in DivX, an MPEG-4 based video compression technology. Thanks to the Progressive Scan feature, Philips DVD Players give razor-sharp and flicker-free images, plus high quality analog and digital audio outputs.

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Unrivaled video performance and superior audio pleasure combine in the *Philips DVP5500S.* With its ultra-sleek, minimal look, this DVD player features the wonder of multi-channel Super Audio CD music and surround sound cinematic movie experience, coupled with high resolution imaging technology to give you the closest to live performance in entertainment.

Should you wish to record anything, then go for the *Philips DVDR520H,* which comes with 80GB of hard disc storage translating to almost 100 hours of recording. It also comes with optical disc recording and playback on any format.

Record everything with the Philips DVDR520H's 80 GB Hard Disk and DVD recording

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Record everything, and put an end to storage worries! The perfect recording solution comes with Philips DVDR520H. This DVD player comes with an 80-GB hard disk that gives you up to 100 hours of TV or movie recording, and lets you convert your non-DVD materials to DVD. What's more, with the iLink digital connectivity, you can even preserve your favorite camcorder memories straight to DVD. You can even share your favorite stuffs since the DVDs you create will play on other DVD players and PC drives.

Because of the extreme speed of the Hard Disk drive in this Philips DVD player, it enables you to watch the beginning of what you've recorded even while you're still recording the ending! This feature, called FlexTime, is one of the unit's advanced features, and another manifestation of Philips' continuing drive for DVD excellence.

Want a more impressive entertainment box? You can go for the *Philips HTS3300*, a compact DVD Home Entertainment System that boasts of full cinematic sight and sound. Its DVD player comes with an audio arsenal consisting of four 2-way satellite speakers and a 2-way center speaker with subwoofer, enhanced with DTS, Dolby Digital 5.1, Dolby ProLogic II, and Class D Digital Amplifiers, all contributing to high-powered pure digital sound quality. It even has a karaoke function to give you, your family and your friends endless enjoyable singing engagements.

Enjoy freedom with this portable Philips DVP4000 DVD player

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No. 1 in the market

Successive product innovations such as these, both in technology and in design, have made Philips the top-selling brand of DVD player for many years now. By combining such highly advanced features at such a perfect price, Philips has consistently won the preference of consumers over other brands of DVD players.

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Survivors of holocaust seek payment

TEL AVIV—Dressed in striped uniforms like those worn by Jews in Nazi death camps, dozens of Holocaust survivors protested outside an Israeli bank on Tuesday demanding compensation for accounts frozen by Britain in World War Two.

A spokesperson for Bank Leumi, responding to the protest held in Tel Aviv a day ahead of Holocaust Remembrance Day, said it had long ago turned over the money to Israel.

An Israeli parliamentary committee report found in January that about 9,000 people were eligible for $23 million compensation from the Israeli government and $8.5 million from Israeli banks for frozen accounts.

Results of the parliamentary probe into the missing accounts, launched in the late 1990s, had embarrassed the Jewish state. Israel had earlier spearheaded a campaign to press Swiss banks who held Jewish assets before the war to make restitution.

The Israeli protesters complained the compensation process was going too slowly. The parliament report said Bank Leumi owed $8.1 million, more than any other Israeli bank. Israel's other large banks owed amounts ranging from $6,500 to $300,000.

"The banks are waiting for all of us to die," one sign read.

At the outbreak of World War Two, most of the accounts European Jews opened in Palestine in the 1920s and 1930s were designated as enemy assets by the British government and transferred to a British custodian.

They were later handed over to an Israeli custodian when Israel was established in 1948.

A Bank Leumi spokesperson said his bank had handed over the money decades ago, and compensation was up to the Israeli government.

"The funds are no longer in the hands of Leumi Bank or any other Israeli bank," spokesman Gideon Shul said. "There is nothing we can do to make this process faster." *Reuters*

Second polio case confirmed in Indonesia

JAKARTA—A second case of polio has been confirmed in Indonesia following the detection of a strain of the crippling virus believed to have originated from Africa, health authorities said Wednesday.

An 18-month-old boy and a 20-month-old girl are now known to have contracted the disease in the same district of Java island, said Umar Fahmi Achmadi, the health ministry's head of communicable diseases.

The cases, the first in Indonesia since it eradicated polio almost a decade ago, are believed to have entered the country via Saudi Arabia either with migrant workers or Muslim pilgrims visiting the holy city of Mecca.

"I have just received the confirmation this morning that there is a second case of polio detected," Achmadi told AFP.

Indonesian authorities have launched an immunization drive targeting up to five million children—who are most vulnerable to polio—to prevent it spreading in the densely populated area of Sukabumi in western Java.

"The only way is to strengthen our own defense against the disease, and that can be reached through immunization," Achmadi said.

He said there were six suspected cases of polio in Sukabumi, but only two had been confirmed. Analysis of the virus strain showed it originated in Africa, he said.

"The globalization process has resulted in a lot of movement of people between one place to another, and some are carrying contagious diseases," he said.

At its peak, polio killed up to one million people a year worldwide, most of them children.

The disease remains endemic in only six countries—Afghanistan, Egypt, India, Niger, Nigeria and Pakistan—with vaccinations driving down the number of cases from 350,000 in 1988 to a few thousand in recent years. *AFP*

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Please fade away

EDITORIAL

DOUGLAS MacArthur may have famously quoted the old West Point barracks song, "Old soldiers never die, they just fade away," but retired Maj. Gen. Fortunato Abat simply refuses to fade away. In our acronym-obsessed culture, it was perhaps unintended, but one such acronym chosen by his colleagues in the past, ANTS (for Alliance of National Transformation and Solidarity), seems appropriate. Abat has a proud reputation among his military peers of being a straight-shooter and he is known for discipline and his insistence on well-trained personnel, as well as the development programs which he instituted. However, as political amateur, his record is reckless and downright sinister.

At first blush, Abat's reading of our nation's current situation is correct: "Traditional politics has become the major stumbling block in the socioeconomic advancement of the country. Social inequities have given rise to insurgencies, criminal and terrorist violence holding hostage our forward development," he has said. People, too, can applaud his statement that "I am not for a coup d'etat. I'm not for a military takeover—I abhor it," as any right-minded person should. What is all wrong is Abat's prescription for curing the country's ills: installing a junta, or waging a revolution, whether sooner or later.

The impractical and dangerous nature of the call made by Abat is best demonstrated by the manner in which his "revolutionary" convention at the Club Filipino fell apart over the question of a tactical alliance with militant groups. At the same time, from Utrecht in the Netherlands, came a call from Jose Ma. Sison, basically endorsing the same sort of scheme Abat had cooked up. If Abat ended up walking out of his Club Filipino gabfest over what to him looked like a scandalous idea of a fair-weather alliance with militants, then Sison's endorsement of his ideas should prove beyond a shadow of a doubt just how easily his idea of setting up a junta can play into the hands of the very insurgency he detests.

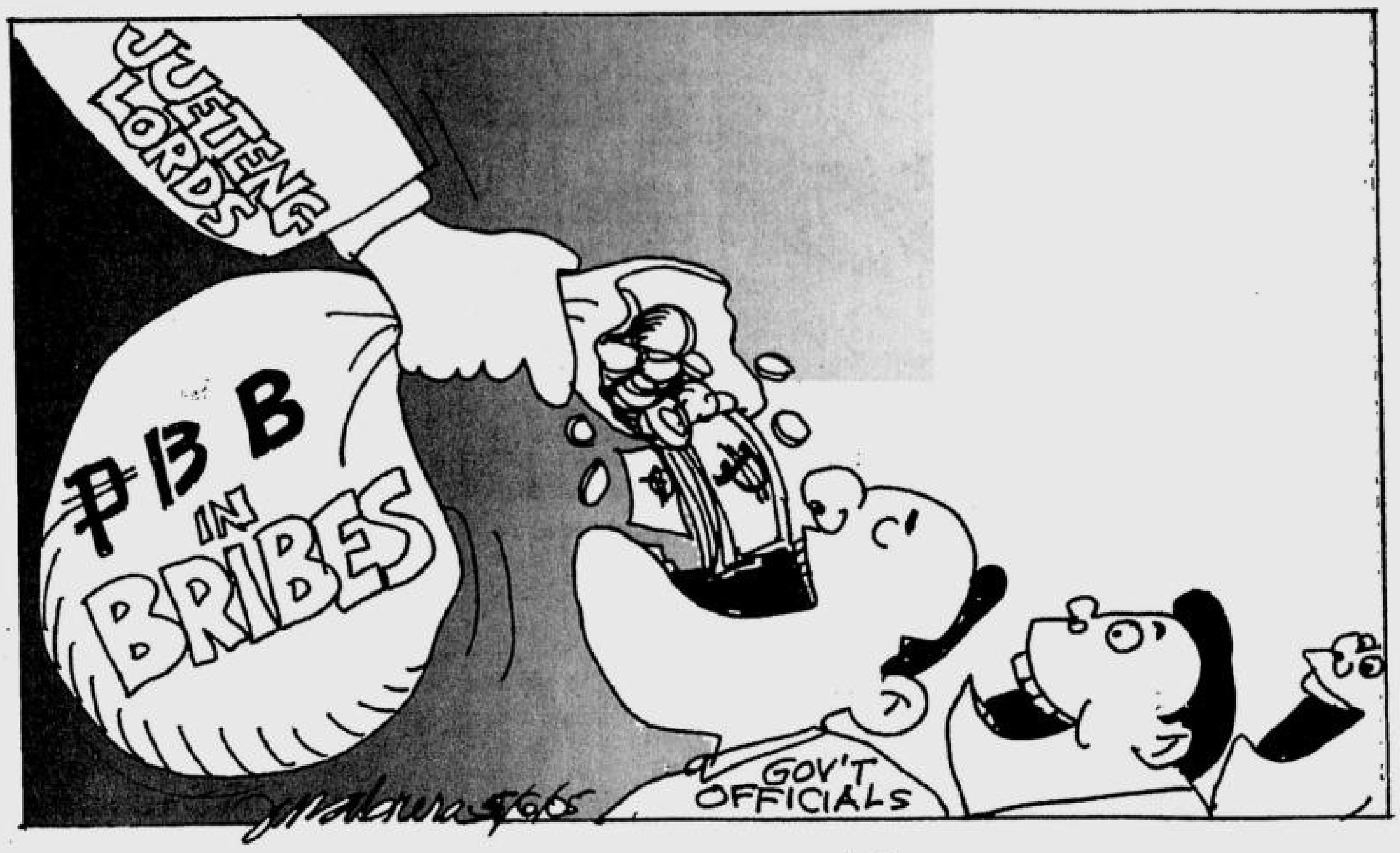
Former President Fidel V. Ramos put it best when he recently said of Abat and friends: "They are doing a great disservice to our country. This will hurt everybody. Let us not panic. Let us stay united ... Let us not believe these so-called messiahs who think they have the answers to the problems of this country." Ramos went on to point out that Abat was a "former Marcos man" (but then, so was Ramos), and crucially, that Abat "never joined Edsa I. He was with Ver fighting us during the People Power Revolution."

However, Abat's mistake apparently did not prevent Ramos from later appointing him as his defense secretary, boosting Abat's prominence and credibility. So while the country should welcome Ramos' clear denunciation of coup plots and junta schemes, he must also own up to having created the political freak that Abat has become.

The current incarnation of Abat's ANTS is now known as the Coalition for National Salvation, with the unamusing acronym of CNS. Its demands, as we've pointed out, are not only ambiguous but outright dangerous to democracy and genuine reform. And yet, why did its actions result in coup jitters and a flurry of statements and counter-statements? Its actions caused alarm due to the basic truth in its primary allegation, as explained in Abat's statement: our system is a mess, and our officials are making a mess of things.

However, in its desire for an extra-constitutional, radical and authoritarian solution, CNS has shown itself to be far removed from the mentality of the public it claims to serve. One does not have to be a fan of former President Corazon Aquino to know that the only way to "restore democracy [is] by the ways of democracy," as she put it. And that way is charted through elections—messy, frustrating and easily susceptible to corruption as that way may be.

Two landmarks in the path to change are the local elections in 2007 and the national elections in 2010. There, all groups can surely find the means to exert pressure on an unsatisfactory status quo. The present administration, the most unpopular in the history of measured public opinion, will depend on the 2007 elections for its political survival. Two years from now is ample time to prepare for an overwhelming, clear and unquestionable referendum on its policies and governance.



Bailing on unpayable trips

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

"IF our ship of state continues to be, in the words of T.S. Eliot, 'a drifting boat with a slow leakage'...(our people) will lose hope, not only in their government, but in themselves.

"They will no longer content to be 'forever bailing.' They will not long be persuaded to make 'a trip that will be unpayable, for a haul that will not bear examination."

That sums up concisely today's disquiet. Signs of unrest are everywhere: in surveys tracking the steady erosion of trust in the Arroyo administration, metastasis of poverty, the scramble for visas to geriatric generals calling for a junta.

It was in the equally-troubled 1970s that historian Horacio de la Costa, SJ used this striking image in his paper, "The Filipino and His Problems Today." Ateneo de Manila includes that address in the De la Costa papers, published after the Jesuit's death.

"We must stop the leakage, end the drift, find a direction and steer," De la Costa insisted then. "Only thus can we solve what is perhaps our most crucial problem: the restoration of hope."

President Macagapal-Arroyo had the opportunity, after the election, to ram through radical reforms—and restore hope. Instead, she squandered what political capital she mustered.

Shady characters, for example, were reappointed with dispatch to the Commission on Elections. That abuse persisted. Sterling officials, like PCGG's Haydee Yorac, were recently muscled aside. Coco levy predators, held at bay by Yorac, will soon make Jose Pidal pale by comparison.

"Four things never return," the old proverb says. "The sped arrow, the spoken word, time wasted—and missed opportunity."

The elbow room for the Arroyo regime is shrinking. "Will the center hold?" as W.B. Yeats asked. Will the Constitution withstand the battering ahead?

Not if they can help it, say discredited politicians clustered around detained former President Joseph Estrada. People Power 4, they wink, is around the corner. An Edsa 4 will ask people to lay down their lives, if need be. But who'd give his life for Jose Velarde who signs his name in different ways?

Local communists never mustered enough warm bodies. They've tried to piggy-back on those with followings: from FPJ, his wife to church figures. Now, the European Union is about to eject their guru Jose Maria from his Netherlands haven. And Beijing is bent on capitalist trade.

But continued Arroyo misgovernance could provide brushfire fuel. "Satur Ocampo, Teddy Casiño and 10 other party-list congressmen from the communist movement are already a presence in Congress," writes the Philippines Free Press' Antonio Abaya. They've "established militant front organizations" among students, women, fishermen, jeepney drivers to OFWs...The only elements missing are NDF fronts among the military and the police."

So, will a politicized military be the "wild card"? asks commentator Ronald Meinardus in a Japan Times analysis last April 4. There's no plausible external military threat here. "The strategic focus is inward-looking and perception of the enemy local." Unrest in the ranks persists where constitutional values have atrophied.

Ms Arroyo wedged military leaders into high government jobs. This strategy of co-optation "has been partially successful." She had the failed Magdalo mutiny to quash while seven coups serially assaulted the Aquino regime.

Do graft charges against generals pose the biggest test? What surfaced so far, notably among AFP finance officers, is scandalous. "But many Filipinos believe this is only the tip of the iceberg. Corruption in the Philippine military reflects the pervasiveness of corrupt practices in society at large."

Will this trigger a military backlash if the investigations begin upending powerful vested interests? Meinardus worries. "Respect for a basic rule of democratic governance—the supremacy of a popularly elected political leadership—has been lost."

No one desires a cleansing of the AFP Augean stables more intensely than the foot soldier. They've seen their retirement funds gutted and they have been sent into combat without boots, defective ammo, short rations, etc. Graft has reduced the AFP into the weakest of Asean armies. Should would-be caudillos launch a coup, they may find themselves without troops.

"Corruption in the (AFP) is perhaps the single most dangerous security threat to the nation," says US scholar Kevin E. Cross in a paper titled "The Enemy Within."

"Corruption in logistics units in effect arms the Abu Sayyaf bandits and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) separatists from the AFP's own armories," adds former National Security Adviser Jose Almonte. . .

Ms Arroyo, meanwhile, picked a civilian defense secretary. Undersecretaries from the business sector ride shotgun on procurement systems. A UP specialist on the military tracks the Feliciano Commission's reforms.

The junta proposal is "hare-brained," says former President Fidel Ramos. From Greece, Chile, Argentina to Burma, juntas have failed.

"Governments dominated by the military," the Swedish Institute of International Affairs notes, "are the least likely to respond to the needs of the poor...The army ploughs the seas."

People recoil at a rerun of Marcos New Society. They reject languishing under either commissars or generals. They'd prefer keeping constitutional structures. But Gloria's namby-pamby rule is unsustainable.

Misgovernance and OPEC's $55-a-barrel oil could drive citizens who can't—or won't—emigrate to refuse bailing out "a drifting boat with a slow leakage" for an unpayable trip that will will not bear examination.

* * *

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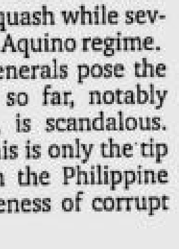
Again, unity

THERE'S THE RUB



Conrado de Quiros

JOSE de Venecia believes he has the answer to Fortunato Abat's desire to end Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's rule. That is building a "rainbow coalition" to "deliver a ringing condemnation of recurring coup attempts and to move the country forward to constitutional amendments."

Specifically, that means calling people from various parties, from Franklin Drilon to Etta Rosales, from Edgardo Angara to Satur Ocampo, to a grand meeting to settle differences. The immediate aim is "to put an end to extralegal and extra-constitutional moves against the duly elected government of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo." The long-term aim "is to unify the country, end the gridlock, approve the revenue measures needed by the country, complete the peace agreements with the insurgent groups, and move forward constitutional reforms."

He believes wrong.

He misses the point entirely. The least of his problems is getting all the people he means to invite to accept his invitation. He has an exaggerated sense of importance to imagine he has the stature or credibility to play the role of peacemaker or statesman in these trying times. So far his accomplishments have included running for president with the backing of the strongest party and losing to his rival, Erap, by the biggest margin, and attempting to unseat the Chief Justice, or abetting his colleagues in the House in that endeavor, on the richly ironic ground of corruption. Mention the word "*trapo*," and the first name that comes to mind is "De Venecia." Well, maybe GMA—it's a tossup between them. "*Trapos*" do not naturally get people to accept invitations to weddings, funerals, or both at the same time.

Especially so as De Venecia's agenda, couched as it is in lofty language, thinly disguises personal ambition. He is the most avid advocate of "constitutional reform" or "constitutional amendment" for one reason, and one reason only. It is the only way he can hope to become top dog in this country. He can never win as president but he can always win as prime minister. A parliamentary system leaves the choice of prime minister to the party in power, not to the voter at large. He is the biggest proponent of Charter change, which is also to say he is the biggest argument against it.

De Venecia forgets two things in his plan. The first is that his boss, around whom he wants the world to rally, came to power on the very basis of an extralegal and extra-constitutional move against the duly elected government of Joseph Estrada. The "duly elected" in Erap's case, as I said yesterday, was exceptionally ironclad. Erap's lead over De Venecia was humongous, and he didn't need the Comelec to cheat for him. The "duly elected" in GMA's case is far less patent, to go by the surveys.

You don't need a summit meeting to get a "ringing condemnation of coups," most Filipinos do not want one. Not even Abat, by his earnest avowals. But no meeting, summit or not, may condemn people power, ringingly or not. That is a basic right of the citizen—possibly the only effective one in a country given to perennial vicious misrule. It is at least arguable that the reason for ousting Erap, which was that he bankrupted the nation not just financially but morally, applies as well—or even more—to GMA.

The second thing De Venecia forgets is the cause of this country's disunity, for which he means to find the cure. No one in fact identified that cause more accurately than his boss herself. GMA did so in the most incisive way in her speech on Rizal Day in December 2002. To quote her again: "In view of all these factors, I have decided not to run for president... If I were to run, it will require a major political effort on my part. But since I'm among the principal figures in the divisive national events for the last two or three years, my political efforts can only result in never-ending divisiveness."

But she did run. And she did produce the very thing she predicted: never-ending divisiveness. Surely, to go by her brilliant dissertation, the solution to the current problem of disunity is clear-cut? Impeach her, and you'll be surprised at how fast the divisiveness evaporates.

Finally, De Venecia misses the point about who should unite and what on. The point is not for government to reconcile with its enemies, it is for government to reconcile with its people. The first can be bought with power-sharing, the second can be won only with justice. The first can only end in the leaders screwing the people some more, the second can result in government serving the people for the first time. I've said that every time GMA talks of reconciling with Marcos and Erap and their cronies who are often one and the same. Disunity and dissension aren't always bad, they are often necessary. They are not always petty, they are often principled.

Why on earth would we want to reconcile with the people who oppressed us? Which may be asked as well of GMA and her husband today: Why on earth would we want to unite behind the people who've transformed Jose Rizal into Jose Pidal?

This country has never had problems uniting as the need arises. It rose as one twice over the last couple of decades, the second time through the movement that ousted the popularly elected but morally rejected government of Erap, which spawned GMA. In both cases, the question was never who to unite on, it was always what to unite on. The people came together to end a nightmare and build a dream. Of course, the dream turned out to be a new nightmare, especially the second one. But that is another story.

Be careful what you wish for, it may just come true. De Venecia and GMA want this country to unite. They may just get their wish, with or without Abat.

Repudiation would make RP a pariah

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

BISHOPS Deogracias Yñiguez, head of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines public affairs office, and Julio Labayen of Infanta, Quezon, called a press conference recently to denounce the "US-imposed policies of liberalization, deregulation and privatization" of the Arroyo administration. They blame these and issues such as high oil prices and our foreign debt for the country's economic woes and called on the administration to repudiate those policies, especially our foreign debts. They were quoted (wrongly, I hope) as having said that they would not hesitate to support the overthrow of President Macapagal-Arroyo if these policies are not reversed.

In the past, critics have lamented that some of our bishops speak out on issues they don't understand very well. This is one instance when I tend to agree with them. These economic issues are obviously beyond their ken—they can see only the consequences of policies but cannot seem to comprehend what causes them. There is no doubt that our growing foreign debt is perhaps the biggest source of our economic difficulties, but the bishops should see that repudiating them would only isolate the Philippines from the community of nations in this global age—creating greater problems such as the loss of investor confidence and cutting us off from access to financial markets, which would result in total collapse of the economy.

* * *

For instance, it is an indication of our good international standing that RP has gotten concessional loans from countries like Japan and China, obviously due to their confidence in our economy. You repudiate foreign loans and the whole international community will isolate you like a pariah. Which is sad, especially after the stream of international leaders visiting Manila and GMA's recent interactions with them have put us in a good position to bargain for many things.

The bishops also must realize that high oil prices abroad are beyond our control. The key is not repudiation but earnest negotiations. In addition, it must be stressed that supporting a people's uprising to drive out the duly-elected President is the biggest formula for disaster at this point. Instead of carping, the good bishops should help firm up the President's resolve to arrest corruption, which is definitely one of the causes of hardships, as it cheats the people of what should go to them.

* * *

This is not to say that the bishops' concern is not valid. The recent Pulse Asia survey notes a slightly smaller number of people who claim they are not getting enough food to eat—from 43 percent last October 2004 down to 33 percent. But this still means one-third of the population is not eating enough. And in a Christian nation this entails action from the 66 percent that enjoys a bigger bounty from heaven.

* * *

How does one help alleviate the poverty of the 33 percent, so that they will have more food on their table? Raising wages to more decent levels is very Christian, but there are constraints to this. Some families I know choose non-cash options. For instance, some housewives make sure their gardener, laundrywoman or *manicurista* gets to bring home some extra food. Others give bigger tips to taxi drivers, bag boys in the supermarket and others who deliver services. Still others gather newspapers and bottles to give away free to the *magbobote*, or patronize the fruit and *gulay* vendors who push their goods in a *kareton* (the *magkakareton* are said to be perhaps the poorest sectors).

* * *

A friend of mine, Mian Wright Añover, 49, who lives in a plush subdivision in Alabang (she originally hailed from Bacolod), and her husband, lawyer Ignacio "Gig" Añover, and their children drove to San Pedro Tunasan not too long ago to attend the wake of their driver's father. They saw how poor was the community at Sitio Rustan, where their driver, Harry Tilad, lives. The Añovers were touched. Right then and there they resolved to help. They put up a day-care center which they named after St. Josemaria Escriva, founder of Opus Dei. Eventually, at the request of the parents, the Añovers transformed the day-care center into a pre-school with two shifts of 50 students each. This has made San Pedro Mayor Felicisimo Virneza very happy.

But that's not all. The Añovers soon realized that in order to transform the whole community, they ought to seek livelihood training for the kids' mothers. They put up a high-speed sewing center beside the school to train them. Mon Yambing, proprietor of Quality Gloves, a firm exporting gloves to Europe and the United States, has lent a high-speed sewing machine and is committed to recruiting the best trainees to his firm.

* * *

The cost of running such a school is no joke and Mian is appealing to generous readers to adopt a pre-schooler this coming school year. Each student needs P270 for tuition and P580 for books in math, English and science. She is also seeking help for the very poor students at the nearby Barangay Langgam. Please call her at 0917-560-7800 or 809-3823. The Añovers' example shows how private efforts to reach out to the poorer communities can produce wonders.

* * *

I'm glad that Manila International Airport Authority (MIAA) general manager Al Cusi has decided to postpone the opening of Naia 3 from the original schedule of June 3, 2005 to October of this year. I gather that the new terminal's opening was postponed because certain issues have not yet been ironed out. This makes sense. It is so much better to push back the opening and make sure all the kinks are ironed out rather than have a haphazard opening that will necessitate the terminal's closure later. Or even worse, if an accident should happen all because not everything was in place.

The mountains cry out

HUMAN FACE

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

"Like Moses leading his people out of the plagues, in the time of terror and devotion."—the INQUIRER on Raymundo Punongbayan, its 1991 Filipino of the Year

I JUST finished going over the book "Eruption and Exodus: Mount Pinatubo and the Aytas of Zambales" for which I wrote the foreword in 1991. This book chronicles the life of the Aytas and the Franciscan Sisters who lived and worked among them, before, during and after the volcanic eruption that saw much of Central Luzon covered in ash.

In it is written that it was in April 1991 that Mount Pinatubo, dormant for more than 600 years, started to awake and grumble. Two months later, in June 1991, the world witnessed an eruption like no other in a long time. The sky turned opaque gray. Ash and rocks rose from the belly of the earth and rained down on towns and cities. Faraway places in Asia even got a sprinkling of volcanic powder.

4:00 p.m., 2 April 1991 was the time the volcano started to wake up. Fifteen years later, on April 28, 2005, the man who confronted the volcano during those crucial moments, the man who worked to make scientific sense of the grand havoc long, long after the fire had quieted down, volcanologist Raymundo Punongbayan, 68, left this earth via the bosom of a mountain. That is putting it gently. To say that he died in a helicopter crash is so jarring to the heart.

The grief of those he left behind—his family, his colleagues, the community of scientists—is immeasurable. But I am sure there is some consolation in knowing that the former head of the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology and, at the time of his death, governor of the Philippine National Red Cross, and his colleagues all died in the line of duty. They were out there to survey the crags and wounds of the hills that dumped mud, rocks, water and fallen logs on poor shoreline communities several months ago. They were on their way to Dingalan, Aurora. They were to be harbingers of information, disaster preparedness and long-term rehabilitation efforts. But that day, April 28, they—all nine of them—were called home to yonder eternal hills.

"It turned out to be his last mission to save lives" was the lead sentence of the INQUIRER banner story last Friday. Reprinted on the front page was the January 1992 piece on Punongbayan who was INQUIRER's very first "Filipino of the Year." The one who wrote that un-bylined piece sent five successive lengthy text messages to my cell phone. He was reveling in his resurrected work, describing how that magma of a piece was spewed, with the editor in chief breathing down his neck.

"Heady" was how he felt, he said. After all, he had penned, for the INQUIRER, the first and final tribute to the great volcano man. There is joy and pride in having written about a great public servant, death and loss notwithstanding.

I have always been in awe of scientists, both the laboratory based and the outdoor types, and how they try to figure out the mysteries of this planet and the universe out there. Mount Pinatubo, with all the fire and the brimstone in its gut, is just a pimple on the face of the earth, the Grand Canyon a small gash.

I've flown twice over the Pinatubo disaster area, the first time by helicopter and the second by hot-air balloon, when the place, to my surprise, had become a giant movie set. Both experiences were sobering. I felt like a dragonfly flying across a desert. A contemplative desert experience, I must say. During such times, do volcanologists and geologists give way to mystical thoughts? Do they hear the music of the universe?

Lubos na Alyansa ng mga Katutubong Ayta ng Sambales (Lakas), the Ayta authors of the book I mentioned, is organizing a tribute for Punongbayan. He is their brother. In 2001, during the 10th anniversary of the Mount Pinatubo eruption, the Aytas came to the Phivolcs headquarters for the commemoration. I could see the strong bond between Punongbayan and the Aytas.

What remains of Punongbayan's mortal body and those of two others have yet to be identified. There must be precious little left as the chopper and its passengers went up in a blaze. Death was swift and instant which is not the way most people go to the afterlife. But it is not as horrific as we picture it to be, some scientists have found out.

Best-selling doctor-author Sherwin Nuland ("How We Die: Reflections on Life's Final Chapter") who has scientifically studied the phenomenon of death says: "Whatever the source, humankind and many animals seem to be protected at the instant when sudden death approaches—protected not only from the horror of death itself but from certain kinds of counterproductive actions that might ensure it or extend its anguish…

"Like so many other biochemical explanations of obscure, seemingly mystical phenomena, this one has no argument with the religious among us. I am neither the first to wonder about the mysterious ways in which God is thought to work His inscrutable will nor the source of the rumor that He may use chemicals to do it." You've heard about endorphins.

With the help of science, there is no doubt that the remains of those who perished would be identified for the peace of mind of the bereaved. How these remains will be laid to rest is up to the families. For Punongbayan, a news report said that he had, beforehand, expressed a wish that his ashes be made part of the Taal Volcano area. (But why not Pinatubo?)

That, I think, is giving back one's mortal shell to the earth in the truest sense. No urn, no tomb. Just the mountains of his heart. Punongbayan has chosen a perfect place. His spirit lives.

* * *

Send comments to cerespd@info.com.ph

Unreasonable expectations

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III

A FRIEND recently complained about the inability of the government to get its act together.

So what else is new? His complaint, though, was specific. All sorts of penalties have been imposed against people who drive vehicles without license plates, but government itself is unable to manufacture enough plates to meet the demand. The backlog puts the buyers of motor vehicles, particularly motorcycles (increasingly popular due to their relatively cheap cost), in an unreasonable situation. Someone who buys a vehicle should be able to use the vehicle soon after purchase; the sellers of vehicles, on the other hand, shouldn't be in the business of "facilitating" the release of license plates, since their real business is to sell vehicles. As it is, the consumer, after having plunked down hard cash or after signing up for an installment plan, has to either put up with an idle asset (the vehicle) or pester the vehicle dealer, and the government, or both. The vehicle dealer, too, ties up time and resources in nagging the government to issue license plates.

What's worse is that the government apportions plates not according to need but rather along Stalinist lines: every Land Transportation Office branch gets its quota of plates, which means an overabundance in some places, and a chronic shortage in others, which, surprise, surprise, helps foster corruption in the places suffering from shortages. When my friend bewailed this state of affairs, I couldn't resist quipping that it must be delightful to register a motorcyle in Tawi-Tawi. We are socialist in the worst sense, lacking socialism's ruthless soft spot for the ordinary citizen, not to mention the underprivileged.

All government transactions can be summarized as involving the following procedure: first, fill out a form; second, have the form inspected, and the fee assessed (with the preliminary inspection and assessment requiring signatures or rubber stamps, or both), either in one or two separate locations; third, having lined up for part one, line up again to pay the assessment, which involves, of course, more signatures and rubber stamps; fourth, line up somewhere else again, to have the first assessment, and the payment, validated in turn (the lining up process involving a chaotic scramble since there are never enough windows open or people organizing the lines); fifth, after having the document validated at least three times, have the entire process scrutinized and validated as having been validly validated during the prior validations, at which point you can transact the matter at hand—or at least, be told to come back tomorrow, which may or may not involve a further validation to authenticate your having gone through the process the day before.

To be fair, the red tape our civil servants glory in is not uniquely Filipino; it is the culture of bureaucrats everywhere. The Germans, for example, as an American once told me, are fanatical about red tape, but each civil servant has a rotating carousel of rubber stamps: the German fetish is for neat rubber stamp marks inked in neat little boxes, with some stamps requiring counter-stamps. The Americans glory in forms produced in quintuplicate, if possible. The list goes on and on, with each nation's bureaucracy displaying a fetish particularly its own.

What is uniquely Filipino is our obsession with signatures. In grade school and high school, students spend hours perfecting their signatures, scribbling them over and over again, aiming at something best understood as a work of art. I suspect this fetish is a long-standing one: Ferdinand Marcos, for one, must have spent an eternity getting his extremely fancy signature just right.

But if it is in the nature of bureaucrats to consider paper-pushing a kind of religion, involving long, painstakingly slow rituals, it is in the nature of the citizenry to object to these rituals, at least in the public sphere (anyone dealing with the human resources department of any fairly complicated organization knows that HR requirements can be just as senseless and complicated and time-consuming as any government agency's demands for documentation). The offensiveness of government red tape is heightened by the fact that government can derive so many opportunities for fines and punishments from situations arising from its own actions.

A good case in point is the "no plate, no ride" policy. That policy allows for no ifs, ands, or buts, regardless of whether riding around with no plates on your motorcycle, for instance, is a direct result of the government's inability to meet the growing demand of consumers.

In the beginning of the Arroyo presidency, I heartily applauded the President's penchant for dropping in on government offices to scold employees she found napping, painting their nails, absent without leave, or general acting in an inefficient manner. This is what our culture expects presidents to do, and while we all hope and pray direct presidential involvement shouldn't be needed for offices to function, most people are thankful for anything that helps put people back on track. I have always said she should have done it some more because seeing her vent her fury on officials and civil servants was one case where her temper and voice provided pleasure to the public. Unfortunately, she hasn't continued the practice (on some very bad advice, I'd say), resulting in her demonstrations of administrative zeal being shrugged off as mere gimmickry.

There are many government offices trimming red tape, but much still needs to be done in rationalizing the processes the government demands of its citizens, but which, through its own shortcomings, it's unable to fulfill. Obeying the law shouldn't require having to break the law, which is too often still the case, in order to simply function in daily life.

Broke

YOUNG BLOOD

Alvin

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

MY wallet was taken by a pickpocket one Sunday and I was practically bankrupt for more than a week. Not knowing how to support myself for 10 days until the next payday, I told some people all of what was left of my salary was in the wallet. Their common reaction was to ask how much money I had there.

Honestly, I lost only P900, but I told them I lost much more so that they would continue to consider me as an eligible bachelor. From their reaction, I didn't feel any concern at all. I thought that all they were interested in was knowing how much money I had. I wondered why many people would want to know the state of my finances.

Every time I applied for a loan, the required signatories never failed to ask what I needed the money for, considering that I was single. When I requested that reimbursement for some expenses be rushed, I was asked the same question.

I have turned down offers to attend seminars outside the province because I didn't have enough money and my superiors thought they could easily persuade me by pointing out, "You got no children to support and to take care of." Many times I have been asked to buy jewelry, a video camera, guns, a motorcycle, perfume, but I could not afford them. I would tell people I had no money for such things and they would say I was just being stingy. I don't think I have to explain to them that I am supporting a brother who is studying in Manila, and that's the reason I am always short of cash.

Actually I can be a spendthrift, flashy and ambitious. I have lots of dreams, like having a car, a pad of my own and lots of girls. I dream of having so many fantastic luxuries that I cannot buy on my salary. In fact, I get depressed when I remember that I couldn't get the Nokia 6600 I promised to gift myself with last Christmas.

The meager salary Grade 10 of a public school teacher cannot pay for the simple luxuries much less sustain the vanity of a bachelor. Certainly it's not enough to send two siblings to college at the same time. A monthly salary of P10,000, minus all the deductions for taxes and loan repayment, is hard to stretch, considering that half of it goes straight to my siblings. At my age I haven't any savings, contrary to what everybody seems to think. I am not living a lavish lifestyle, but with my responsibilities and my daily expenses, I cannot maintain a fat bank account.

On my last birthday, I realized how miserable I was. I found myself crying in front of my best friend because I could not give my colleagues the birthday treat they had been teasing me about. That night, my friend and I had to settle for a bottle of Ginebra since I could not afford to buy a case of Red Horse beer.

When my mother was brought to the hospital last year, I cursed our being poor. Around her in the charity ward of a government hospital were about 20 other patients who were howling in pain. I was in anguish as I looked at the stained mattress and pillows my mother was lying on and the rusty bed railings. I could smell the stink of the toilet near her bed.

I stayed outside the hospital, asking myself why we had to suffer such bad fortune. I cried as I thought about my mother's condition and the depressing place she had to stay in. I thought she deserved a private room at the very least.

Last month I was thinking of a good excuse to break up with my girlfriend because she had been talking about getting married every time we went out. I shivered at the thought of tying the knot since I could not support a family yet. And where in the world would I get the P100,000 we would need to have a decent wedding? Tapping the Pag-Ibig Fund or the GSIS for another loan seemed pathetic.

And where would the two of us live? My classroom is my second home for now.

I bet people didn't know that my family sometimes had no food to eat and so my brothers and I had to go to school on empty stomachs. Breakfast often consisted of of two pieces of *tuyo*, one fried egg or pancit for all of us. I would complain about it, but my old folks couldn't do anything.

A promotion seems far-fetched, since that would require that I first finish my M.A. I discontinued my masteral studies two years ago because the tuition was too expensive for me. I have dreamed of someday becoming an undersecretary or at least a division superintendent, but that has to wait for a while since I must put some food in my mouth first.

They say that money is not always the solution to our problems, but in my case it obviously is. I need a fatter paycheck and clearly my present job won't bring me the kind of salary that would enable me to fulfill my dreams and provide my family some of life's comforts. I am desperate to find the pot of gold somewhere.

Expecting to get a raise from an equally impoverished government is hopeless, especially for teachers like me. All the government can provide are loans, cash advances and small cash gifts which won't be enough to pay for a prepaid phone card, a pair of pants, a date and one night in a videoke bar.

Life here is hard and it is getting harder. As a professional, I am beginning to think I have reached a plateau in my career. I can't move up. I am stuck where I am. And I am broke.

My family has a hard time feeding everyone, but I hope the pickpocket who stole my money was able to feed his kids. On the same day I lost it, my wallet was found inside a department store—without the cash, of course. But my ID cards were all there, including my GSIS e-card. I got to withdraw some cash on loan.

Alvin, 28, is an English teacher in a public high school in Pampanga. His father is retired, his mother is a plain housewife and they are all getting hungrier every day, he says.

THEY SAID

Vanishing patriotism

"We can't get enough middle-class kids to die for our country."

—Charles Moskos, military sociologist at Northwestern University, on the declining number of non-Americans enlisting in the US military

Fallen star

"This is a sad story because at one time you are at the top of the pedestal of your basketball career, and suddenly you are behind bars."

—Rep. Monico Puentevella on one of Philippine Basketball Association's popular players, Rudy Distrito, who is facing murder charges in the United States

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PPI

Greed in banks' dormancy fees

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas is reportedly being swamped with complaints about charges on inactive deposit accounts: dormancy fees are "hidden charges" eating into the depositors' hard-earned savings. (PDI, 4/13/05)

Bangko Sentral officials should look into this ticklish problem, the soonest to prevent greedy depository-banks (debtor) from punishing their depositor-clients (creditor) by this unlawful scheme. Instead, dormant savings accounts should earn interest perpetually. Why? Because they are actually loans according to the Supreme Court.

The high court has ruled that bank deposits, whether fixed, savings or current, are treated as loans because they earn interest under Article 1890 of the Civil Code of the Philippines. (Gullas vs PNB 62 Phil. 519)

—ELIGIO M. PASTORIN,
92 Paraiso St.,
Parang, Marikina City

In defense of Focolare

I HAVE no intention of engaging in a protracted and long-winded religious debate because I am not a believer in organized religion. I do not consider myself Catholic (although I was baptized as one); neither am I a member of any formal religious grouping. Being agnostic, I delight in having a dispassionate perspective of different belief systems and philosophies without fearing the wrath of the heavens descending upon me.

In other words, I am eternally involved in personal research (not search, please), and I do this through experiential involvement in different religions and belief systems (Ananda Marga, Buddhism, even materialist-oriented Marxism-Leninism-Maoism). I am not sure what my purpose is but, somehow, it seems to be leading me to a discovery of "truth" in my own terms, without fear or pressure from my heavily Catholic past or social milieu.

In this connection, I would like to comment on a recent story by Lito B. Zulueta, titled "Opus Dei, Focolare clout seen as factor in conclave." (PDI, 4/17/05)

I do not care much for Opus Dei—its history is all wrapped up in sinister intrigues and worldly involvement. I have met many members of the Opus Dei here and I do find them to be bigoted, imposing their religion on others and passing judgment on those who do not toe their regimented line.

But I have met many people in the Focolare, some in my youth and just recently. I must say with all honesty that the members of the Focolare whom I have come to know exude an aura of peace and love. It is so powerful that it has the potential of providing that essential unifying factor that can work across all races, creeds and circumstances.

In the group, I have met Hindus, Muslims, fellow agnostics, Christians of different races, and they feel unified and at peace with each other's differences, something our world right now is crying out for. I am sure there are other religious movements whose members and belief systems possess the same awesome virtues, except that in my case, being most familiar with the Catholic faith, I can more easily relate with the Focolare.

What makes the Focolare different is the fact that "love" has taken a context of non-discriminatory acceptance and respect for every person, regardless of circumstance. It will be impossible for me to say more without sounding corny and unreal. What I can say is that you can only realize this when you are in the group, sensing their aura and hearing them converse. I am 54, a former journalist and I consider myself to be extremely sensitive to "auras"—not in the psychic sense but in ways familiar to a well-seasoned news hound.

I found it therefore most unfair for Zulueta to allude to a book that casts doubts on the integrity of the Focolare. I am not a member of the Focolare myself but I feel that I must do my bit in the interest of truth and fair play.

—CAROL E. ESPIRITU,
U610 MCS Tower,
1299 Chino Roces Ave.,
Makati City

THE STORY does not cast doubt on the integrity of the Focolare and the Opus Dei. It reports on the influence of such "new movements" in the Roman Catholic Church and speculates, with objectivity, on their influence in the last conclave. The book, "The Pope's Armada," was cited to explain the activities of the new movements. Its author, Gordon Urquhart, was for 10 years a Focolare member himself.

—LITO B. ZULUETA

Conjectures of a coco fund 'guardian'

IT is sad to hear Romeo Royandoyan, executive director of the Philippine Peasant Institute, claiming to be among the guardians of the coconut levy fund, accusing ousted Philippine Coconut Authority chief Evangeline Valbuena of merely making up stories about the anomalous P8.4-billion coco project in Agusan del Sur. Even more unfortunate is his claim that those who joined Valbuena in opposing the project did not study the issue. (PDI, 4/15/05)

Royandoyan should be reminded that the opposition to the proposed project is grounded on three basic issues:

One, we do not see wisdom in pouring billions of pesos from the coco levy funds into a single project in just one province. The project simply lacks a sense of justice and proportion. The coconut industry in 67 provinces needs national rehabilitation, not a municipal-wide project being rammed down our throats.

Two, evidence shows that the government is intent on using coco levy funds to finance the project, contrary to the claim of Royandoyan. Let us quote from two among many sources:

"He (Danilo Coronacion) said that the MOU may effectively lead to the tapping of CIIF's P1.6 billion dividend in its investment in San Miguel Corp. as a seed fund for the development of coconut land in Agusan del Sur." (Manila Bulletin, 10/07/04) The CIIF is, of course, a creation of the coconut levy funds.

"The proposed allocation of the P8.4B to come from the coconut levy funds for the Agusan Reserve Area Development Project may not be acceptable to the rest of the 67 provinces which contributed to the levy," said Ka Oca Santos in a letter to the INQUIRER. Of course, everybody knows who Ka Oca is in the struggle for the protection of the coco sector and the recovery of the coco levy funds. Is he one of those Royandoyan claims to be "unaware of the issue"?

Three, the project is not transparent and is therefore doomed to fail as any other non-transparent undertaking. We must stop this before it becomes a waste.

Royandoyan is the one making conjectures when he said: "[T]he small coconut farmers have been very critical of Valbuena since she assumed office. And this could be the major reason why the Arroyo administration has been mulling the termination of Valbuena's services."

We wonder who these small farmers are that Royandoyan is talking about. Maybe they are those who have been appointed to represent coco farmers in corporations being funded with the coco levy, such as the UCPB, CIIF, Legaspi Oil Mill and the like. Maybe, we should start asking about what they have done to protect the coco levy funds invested in the corporations where they now sit as board members.

—MANUEL P. QUIAMBAO,
president,
Peace Foundation Inc.,
262 15th Avenue,
Cubao, Quezon City

Morally reprehensible plan

THE REPORTED plan of the Yuchengco Group of Companies' Pacific Plans to pay no less than 34,000 planholders only after five years at minimal interest can be likened to a captain of a sinking ship who abandoned his hapless passengers in the high seas when no one was looking.

The plan may make good business sense from the air-conditioned boardroom of the Yuchengcos in the plush RCBC Towers in Makati City, but it is morally reprehensible for them to put up a new company, Lifetime Plans, to cart off the non-problematic accounts in order to save only their investment.

It may be understandable if the family has no other business interests. But why should anyone wait to be paid when the Yuchengcos can readily settle their dues several times over? They own RCBC, EEI, Malayan, Grepalife and some Honda and Isuzu dealerships, to name only a few. They also bought the Mapua school for P1 billion in cash.

I sincerely wonder if family patriarch and group founder Ambassador Alfonso Yuchengco is still in control—this situation might have been avoided if he were. A man who, I believe, values his reputation above all else, he might have bothered to put up the money himself.

—SONNY CUENCO,
14 Sarmiento St.,
Better Living Subdivision,
Parañaque City

Anti-poor terminal?

THE PASSENGER terminal in the Batangas port, or its management, is anti-poor.

It is normal among Filipinos, the "*promdi*" (those residing in the provinces) in particular, to bring provisions or "*pasalubong*"—either fresh, cooked or frozen—for their relatives, sons or daughters studying or working in Batangas or in Manila. Most of them are ordinary working people from Oriental Mindoro.

At the Batangas port, they have to go around the passenger terminal building and the newly built livelihood building to reach the bus-jeepney terminal from the disembarkation area. This means they have to walk at least 400 meters, usually carrying heavy baggage.

On the other hand, VIPs, politicians and the well-off VIP passengers are allowed to bring their cars or met by their drivers right beside the accommodation ladder or ramp, so they are spared the 400-meter inconvenience.

The "Libre Sakay" bus was never used, except for display. The jeepneys inside the terminal compound, supposedly to ferry passengers to RO-RO vessels, are very seldom used, and if ever, only during nighttime. We don't know if providing passenger buses and jeepneys to and from the RO-RO vessels is one of the obligations of the terminal operator under its franchise.

Why is it that "*colorum*" vans (unlicensed passenger vehicles), not the LTFRB-registered buses and jeepneys, are allowed to wait for passengers right outside the gate of the Batangas port?

Senior citizens riding cars on their way to RO-RO vessels are not given discounts on terminal fees, even if they don't have to pass by the terminal. Does this conform with President Macapagal-Arroyo's "Biyahe Na, Isang Sakay Lang" promo?

Millions of pesos were spent in the construction of the elevated passenger walkway in the Port of Batangas, but it has never been used because it would be impractical to use it. Now it's being repaired and repainted.

"*Napakaganda pero sayang ang pera* (Beautiful but a waste of money)!"

—OSCAR RICAFLANCA,
oricaflanca@hotmail.com

SAHOD, TRABAHO
KARAPATAN, IPAGLABAN!
- KMU WOMEN

AN UNENDING story: lowly paid workers crying for just wages

PDI PHOTO

Divine justice demands payment of just wages

WE add our voices to the cries for dignity and justice for all Filipino workers. As they continue to be deprived of just wages and job security, let the message of Jeremiah 22:13 warn those who gain wealth and power at the expense of the poor:

"Doomed is the one who builds his house by injustice and enlarges it by dishonesty; who makes his people work for nothing and does not pay their wages."

Over the years, the Task Force on Urban Conscientization (TFUC) has witnessed and served among the urban poor communities. As the threats of demolition compound the workers' economic woes, our hearts cry out for justice for the poor who suffer modern-day slavery in farms, factories, big shopping malls and other workplaces.

Deprived of sufficient wages and benefits, more than 5,000 farmers and workers of Hacienda Luisita have been on strike since November 2004. Several times, their picket lines have been dispersed violently, a number of them even massacred.

How many more lives will be deprived of dignity of labor? How many more workers will be deprived of a short rest from work as they are forced to meet production quotas?

It is the duty of government to ensure just wages and job security rather than promote slave wages and labor contractualization just to attract foreign investors.

We call on President Macapagal-Arroyo to heed the workers' demands for a nationwide P125 wage increase. The real value of the P250 minimum wage in Metro Manila continues to be reduced by the increasing cost of goods and services. The minimum wage levels outside the NCR are even lower, and the lack of job opportunities continue to drive thousands of Filipinos to seek employment abroad, never mind the grave risks and sacrifices.

We are disheartened that in Hacienda Luisita and in many other labor cases, the Assumption of Jurisdiction (AJ) has been used to allow the goons of the capitalists, together with the police and military, to brutally suppress the workers' right to strike. We, therefore, urge the country's lawmakers to repeal Article 263 (g) of the current Labor Code which gives power to the labor secretary to issue repressive AJ orders that largely favor abusive capitalists.

There is grave injustice when the owners and stockholders of big companies are getting richer while their poor workers become even poorer, burdened all the more by endless price hikes and taxes imposed by the government.

The TFUC reminds the powers-that-be of the Lord's instruction: "Do not take advantage of a hired man who is poor and needy…Pay him his wages each day before sunset, because he is poor and is counting on it. Otherwise, he may cry to the Lord against you, and you will be guilty of sin." (Deuteronomy 24:14-15)

—SR. ANGELITA NAVARRO, ICM,
chair, Task Force on Urban
Conscientization (TFUC)-Mission
Partner of the Association
of Major Religious Superiors
in the Philippines (AMRSP),
De Meester Residence,
St. Theresa's College Compound,
D. Tuazon Avenue, Quezon City

Mayor's clean and green hogwash

ON A RECENT visit to your country to look into potential business prospects, my colleague and I noticed some very pertinent facts.

During the course of our stay in Manila, we traveled to Muntinlupa City where we were astonished to notice certain contradictions. Despite signs proclaiming a clean and green environment, the opposite was obvious.

In the vicinity of the Muntinlupa City Public Library, beside the main road was a rubbish dump. In another area close to a school, families were living on a huge rubbish tip. With no sanitation, the conditions made people predisposed to typhoid and tuberculosis infection. As Westerners we were shocked and appalled.

We understand there is a mayoral system in the Philippines, but surely one of the functions of the mayor is ensuring the social welfare of the people. The mayor holds high office, but what exactly does he do? Is there any accountability? Surely modern Filipinos must realize that this is unacceptable.

For your country's next generation and their children, the next decade of reform is crucial. Put the capital "P" back into your country…Pride.

—MONTAGUE RAVENSCROFT,
FINLAY DE WARREN,
West Hampstead,
London, United Kingdom

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Press freedom and democracy

COMMENTARY

Andrew Alexander

WASHINGTON—At a recent gathering of the nation's newspaper editors, President Bush invoked the words of Thomas Jefferson, who said, "Our liberty depends on freedom of the press that cannot be limited without being lost." Then he drew a chuckle when he quoted Jefferson again: "I've given up newspapers, and I find myself much happier."

Jefferson's views aren't in conflict. The press can be prickly, prying and provocative. Public officials and others in power do not enjoy the incessant scrutiny and critical eye of journalists performing their watchdog role.

But Jefferson realized that a free press, however bothersome and imperfect, is essential for democracies to emerge and thrive.

His seemingly incongruous views were worth remembering on May 3, World Press Freedom Day. Designated by the United Nations in 1993, it is the day each year that we celebrate the fundamental principles of press freedom. It also reminds us that in too many parts of the world it is commonplace for governments to harass, detain, fine, attack and kill journalists for their "crime" of trying to tell the truth.

Last year was one of the most deadly for journalists in the past two centuries. Of the 78 who died, nearly a third were lost while covering the conflict in Iraq. But many others perished in tyrannical or lawless societies when they probed too deeply for public information or offered views considered too critical.

Large numbers are in prisons, languishing in unsanitary conditions, without adequate food of medical care. At year's end, more than 20 remained jailed in Cuba alone. And according to the respected New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists, China has retained its title as the world's leading jailer of journalists with 42 editors and writers in prison as the current year began.

Throughout its history, the United States has rightly been seen as a shining example of press freedom. But in marking World Press Freedom Day, it is important to recognize that that image is now being tarnished by dangerous trends toward government secrecy and control.

Roughly 30 American journalists currently are at risk of being sent to jail for refusing to reveal the identities of fellow citizens who provided them with information on a confidential basis. It is sadly ironic that when this type of coercion occurs in other countries, the US government denounces it as little more than a crude effort by prosecutors and judges to use journalists as an arm of the police.

Similarly, many no longer see America as the model of openness for emerging democracies. While more and more countries embrace the concept of open records, experts say the United States is moving toward greater secrecy.

Some 61 countries have passed laws giving citizens the right to examine government records and other previously secret information. More than half of these laws were adopted in the last decade.

David Banisar, author of a respected study examining open access laws around the world, recently proclaimed that "a new era of government transparency has arrived." Emerging democracies recognize they must be more open to thrive in the global age of information. That is why so many are concerned about the trend toward secrecy in the United States.

"Ironically, secrecy has made the most dramatic comeback in the country that purports to be the most democratic," says Thomas Blanton, director of the non-profit National Security Archive at George Washington University.

In its recently released annual report to the president, the federal government's Informational Security Oversight Office said that the number of decisions to classify government documents soared from 9 million in 2001 to 15.5 million last year—an 81 percent increase. At the same time, the agency reported, the declassification of government records declined from 100 million pages in 2001 to just 28 million in 2004.

In his recent appearance at the American Society of Newspaper Editors' convention in Washington, President Bush suggested the increased secrecy is necessary for national security. True, government secrecy has expanded in the aftermath of 9/11. And some of it is justified.

But much of the increase has nothing to do with the threat of terrorism. A high percentage of requests under the federal Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) are from ordinary citizens trying to get basic information from their government. Many are requests from those who served in the armed forces who want nothing more than to check on their veterans' benefits or military service record.

The most recent government figures show that the number of FOIA requests for the first time topped 3 million in 2003, a 36-percent increase from the previous year. The sharp increase is not for records involving national security, but rather from citizens seeking information from the Social Security Administration.

This past year, while I was speaking with a visiting group of journalists from a variety of emerging democracies, a few made an unusual plea. They urged greater openness by our government and an end to the threatened imprisonment of journalists. If America is seen as moving toward greater secrecy and control of its press, they argued, it gives license to their own governments to follow the same path.

That's worth thinking about on World Press Freedom Day. Throughout its history, the United States has been a beacon for press freedom, giving hope to the repressed and powerless.

But when we opt for secrecy and press control, we set a horrible example for would-be democracies. And we give cover to the dark forces of tyranny who jail, harass or murder journalists and others who seek nothing more than to tell the truth.

Andrew Alexander is the Washington bureau chief for Cox Newspapers. He serves as chair of the Freedom of Information Committee of the American Society of Newspaper Editors.

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John Hay developers face ₱4-B tax suit

By Vincent Cabreza
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—The Supreme Court has denied with finality a motion for reconsideration seeking the legitimacy of tax benefits that have been granted to the P2.4-billion tourism complex at Camp John Hay here.

The court's en banc ruling, issued on March 29, means the Camp John Hay Development Corp. (CJHDevco), now owes the government up to P4 billion in back taxes, including rentals amounting to P1.2 billion that go back to 1998.

Former President Fidel Ramos issued Proclamation 420 in 1994 to create the John Hay Economic Zone, but the high court ruled on Oct. 24, 2003, that the law creating the Bases Conversion Development Authority did not grant him the power to exempt CJHDevco from taxes.

The court said the law has not specified tax exemptions to all BCDA-run economic zones, except for the Subic Bay Special Economic Zone(SBSEZ) and the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA).

The tribunal disputed the government's argument that Congress intended to apply Subic's tax benefits to all BCDA economic zones, when it drafted the BCDA law.

But the court reminded the government that it was not barred from seeking legislative remedies to address the John Hay question.

Beset by veiled threats of a shutdown due to the government's P200-billion deficit, Georgina Alvarez, CJHDevco senior vice president for legal and corporate services, said they were considering a damage suit against the government for breaching a contract that applies the tax benefits.

Alvarez said the government acted in bad faith when it drew bidders for Camp John Hay in 1995, using the tax exemptions among its terms of reference.

Lawyer Liza Pagano-Calde, BCDA counsel, said BCDA president Narciso Abaya gave CJHDevco a final demand letter on its debt on March 30 "but the company defaulted on April 30."

A CJHDevco source said the government has signified its intention to forfeit the firm's P2-billion assets and sell them to a foreign consortium to raise badly needed revenues.

But Calde said the government would initially respond with a tax suit against the developer.

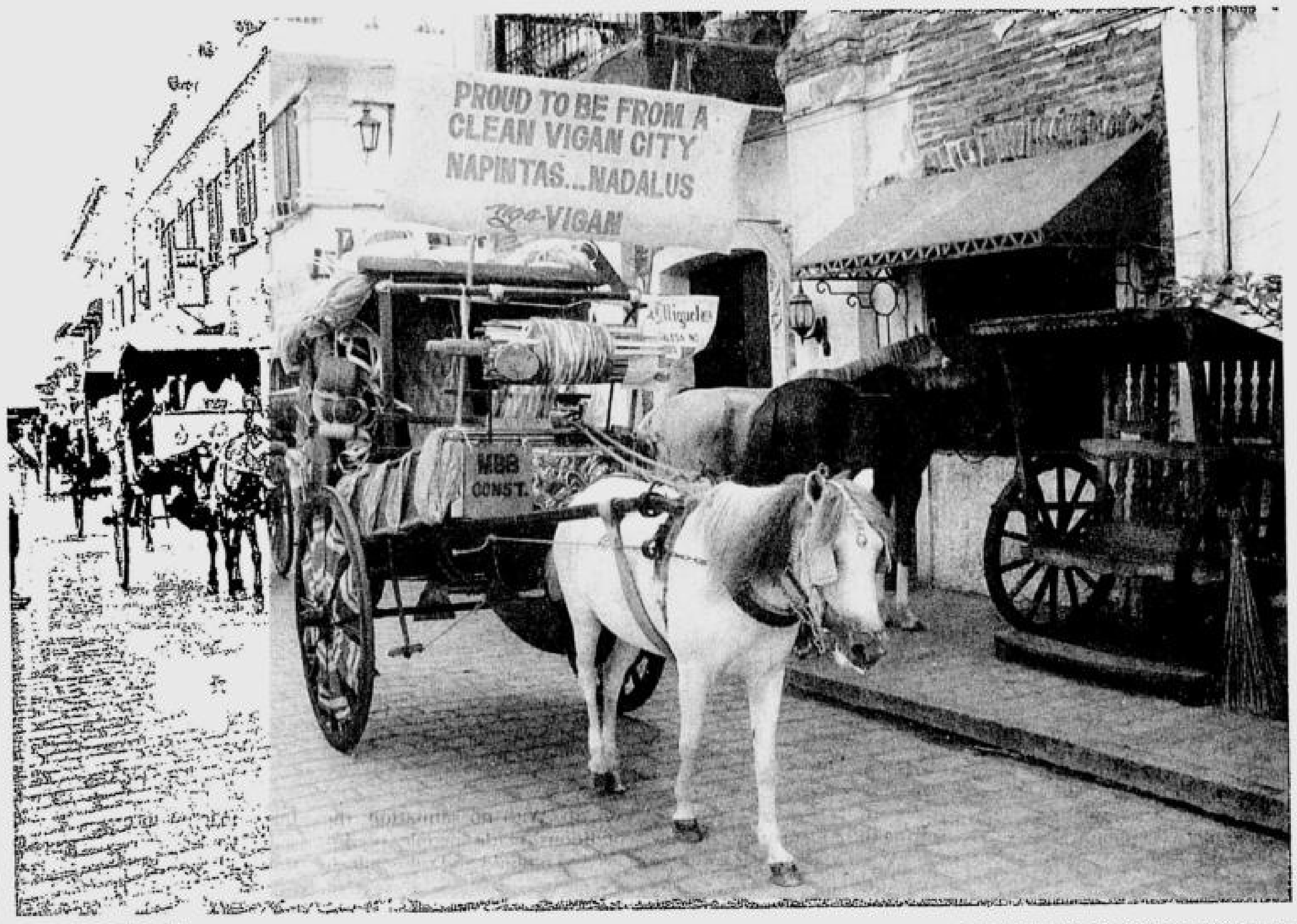
Alvarez said the CJHDevco's "tax exposure of P4 billion excludes import tax duties, but covers from 32 to 35 percent in corporate taxes, a 10-percent value added tax, real estate taxes and other incremental fees." It used to enjoy a 5-percent preferential tax.

She said CJHDevco has also become vulnerable to suits from its 70 residents, the 176-room John Hay Manor, the 289-room John Hay Suites, and several concessionaires at the Mile Hi commercial zone.

Alvarez told reporters in a press briefing on Wednesday that CJHDevco had received letters from their lease holders that demanded that the firm uphold their contracts regardless of how the government taxed the firm.

CJHDevco was negotiating for new lease contracts, in the light of the high court's ruling, it was learned.

Because the ruling only validated the tax benefits of the SBSEZ and SBMA, the high court also negated the benefits being enjoyed by the BCDA-run Clark Special Economic Zone, Poro Point Economic Zone, and future BCDA freeports, Alvarez said.



LEONCIO BALBIN JR./PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

VIGAN PRIDE
Horse-drawn carriages or *calesas*, make their way through the streets of Vigan City in a parade that formed part of the celebration of the 12th Viva Vigan Festival of the Arts.

MILF, MNLF leaders meet, form new Moro group

COTABATO CITY—Key leaders of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) identified with Nur Misuari met in Maguindanao, sparking rumors of a unification talk.

But Eid Kabalu, MILF spokesperson, immediately clarified that the meeting was not a prelude to unification with the Misuari faction but only for purposes of discussing problems facing the Bangsamoro people.

Misuari has been in jail following a bloody revolt by his followers in Zamboanga City and in Sulu in 2001.

"We have nothing to do with him. But our position before was that a member state of the [Organization of the Islamic Conference] should take Misuari into custody," Kabalu said.

He said during the meeting between MNLF vice chair Jimmy Labawan and Ghazali Jaafar, MILF political affairs chief, they talked about possible moves to at ease the burden of the Moro people.

These included efforts to unite Moro leaders for a common agenda for development and other social concerns.

"Actually, it's a series of meetings, a continuation of our efforts not necessarily for unification but similar to what we did to the MNLF Executive Council of 15 before. That's what we want to happen with the MNLF Misuari group," Kabalu said.

The MNLF council of 15 was the same group that ousted Misuari as MNLF chair. Members of the council are senior MNLF leaders, who got elected into government positions.

Kabalu said after the meeting with the MNLF Council of 15, the Bangsamoro Solidarity Conference, which focuses on the development of the Bangsamoro people, was organized. *Jeoffrey Maitem, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

NHI exec wary of planned fast-food outlet in Silliman U

By Alex V. Pal
PDI Visayas Bureau

DUMAGUETE CITY—The National Historical Institute (NHI) has expressed concern over a plan of Silliman University to construct a Jollibee Fast-food drive-through outlet at the back of the campus along the national highway.

In a letter, NHI chair Ambeth Ocampo reminded Silliman University president Agustin Pulido of a provision of Presidential Decree 1505.

The law states that any proposed alterations, modifications or constructions in a declared historic site or structure should have the written approval of the NHI chair.

It also provides that any person who, without written permission from the NHI, destroys, modifies, alters or repairs the original features of any national landmark will face a prison term of from one to five years or a fine of from P1,000 to P10,000.

The NHI, through Resolution No. 7, declared Silliman University as a historic site in 2002 at the height of a campaign to stop the Philippine Ports Authority from pushing through with a plan to reclaim one hectare of the sea in front of the Silliman University for a ferry terminal.

Ocampo said the NHI was anxious over the planned drive-through outlet because this may affect the overall conservation of the university.

Mining to consider tribal rights, say execs

LA TRINIDAD, Benguet—The government's bid to revitalize the mining industry in the Cordillera will be pursued based on strict application requirements and concern for the rights of indigenous peoples, officials of the Mines and Geosciences Bureau here said.

Even the thrust of rehabilitating abandoned mine sites, they said, will include programs to protect the environment and provide social development projects for communities expected to emerge within mining sites.

In a media forum here on Thursday, Felizardo Gacad Jr., MGB mine environment chief, and Eduardo Austria, MGB mining operations officer, said even small-scale mining will now be recognized as a formal sector of the industry in the effort to tap the region's mineral potentials.

But applicants for mining operations will have to go through the needle's eye before being issued permits to operate, Gacad and Austria said.

The officials said many applications have been filed with the MGB but except for those companies already operating, only a few have been granted permits.

"This despite the fact that the Supreme Court has already upheld the constitutionality of the Mining Act or Republic Act 7942," Gacad said.

MGB records showed that since 1990, 129 companies have applied for mining operations in the Cordillera—74 for mineral production sharing agreements (MPSA), 11 for financial and/or technical assistance agreements (FTAA), 39 for exploration permits, and five for industrial sand and gravel plants.

Eight of these applications were filed after the SC ruled late last year that the mining law was legal.

Only nine MPSAs, two exploration permits and four industrial sand and gravel plants have been approved as of April.

None has been approved of the 13 FTAAs, records showed.

Saying that indigenous communities are against mining, environmental and militant groups have protested the mining operations.

They accused the MGB of being insensitive to the plight of indigenous peoples and for being "too lax and too mechanical" in issuing mining permits.

But Gacad and Austria allayed their fears, saying the MGB only issues mining permits once all the legal and social requirements are complied with. *Delmar Cariño, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

ROUNDUP

14 nabbed for gambling

STA. CRUZ, Laguna—Police anti-illegal gambling operations from April 24 to April 27 in various parts of Laguna resulted in the arrest of 14 suspects. Reports reaching the office of SSupt. Jaime D. Calungsod Jr., Laguna provincial police director, identified the suspects as Fedelino D. Diaz, 47, Antonio S. Ramos alias "Boy Iran," 35, Salvador R. dela Cruz, 28, Arnold M. de Onio, 30, and Arturo B. Austria—for jueteng; Fortunata Capuchino, Mario Samson, Lorenzo Yambao and two persons identified only as Fajardo and Cesyl—for video carrera; Emerson M. Madrid, 25, Florentino B. Licuando, 35, Andy T. Ortiz, 31, and Rex V. Sola, 26—for *cara y cruz.*

Romulo O. Ponte, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Teacher training

CITY OF CALAPAN—To upgrade the skills of division teachers here, a regional training workshop in all learning areas under the program "Be Smart" is now ongoing at the Leido Memorial National High School here from May 2-6. The learning areas are Math, English, Science, Filipino and Makabayan. Participated by 600 teachers, the training will benefit 389 schools in the Mimaropa (Mindoro, Marinduque, Romblon and Palawan) region, said Wilfredo Cabral, secondary education division assistant chief. Smart teaching is an effective delivery of the subject matter, design of the learning package, intervention in the learning process and assessment of learners, Cabral said.

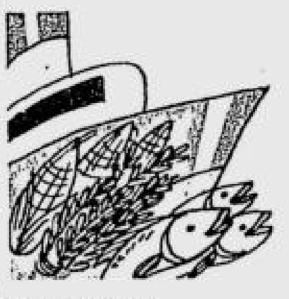
Madonna T. Virola, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

9 held for drugs

STA. CRUZ, Laguna—A series of drug operations made by police in Laguna last week netted nine illegal drug suspects. Police reports said the arrested suspects in Calamba City were Nomerto G. Saturno, 25, and Reymundo F. Libot, 44. The suspects arrested in San Pedro town were Isagani A. Aguilar, 36, and Analiza P. Alvero, 37. Police also arrested Robinson P. Pujol, 24, Roberto M. Cruz, 25, Jeffrey O. Dibdib, and a John Doe, all of Biñan town. In Sta. Cruz, they arrested Marco M. Monteverde, 26. Police said the suspects yielded sachets of shabu and other illegal drugs in various amounts, including drug paraphernalia.

Romulo O. Ponte, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Mindoro targets top food producer



CITY OF CALAPAN—Oriental Mindoro is targeting to be a top food producer in the country. The province is now the sixth food producer nationwide, according to the provincial information office, quoting National Economic and Development Authority regional director Oskar Balbastro. Balbastro recommended that the province's "fighting target" be put into writing and annually evaluated. The Mimaropa Highway steering committee headed by Gov. Arnan C. Panaligan, assisted by Neda, has approved a strategic development plan to maximize the Strong Republic Nautical Highway in the province.

Madonna T. Virola, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Cop killed in car crash

BUTUAN CITY—A police major here was killed when the car he was driving crashed into a speeding six-wheel cargo truck in Barangay Libertad. Police said Chief Insp. Josefino Perez, Jr., deputy regional chief of the Caraga police crime laboratory, died on the spot. Perez was driving Friday evening and was trying to avoid a bicycle. The truck's driver immediately surrendered to authorities.

Franklin A. Caliguid, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Army officer slain in clash

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—A junior military officer was slain when government troops clashed with New People's Army rebels in Marihatag, Surigao del Sur, the military said Wednesday. Maj. Alexis Noel Bravo, spokesperson of the Army's 4th Infantry Division here, said 2Lt. Juline Ross Yandug of the 36th Infantry Battalion, was leading soldiers pursuing NPA rebels, who commandeered a vehicle owned by the Paper Resources Inc. on Monday, when killed. During the clash, soldiers arrested a suspected NPA rebel and seized at least two Garand rifles. Yandug's remains were flown to Manila on Tuesday. Yandug is a member of the Philippine Military Academy Class 2003 and the youngest among his batch. "He would be honored for his bravery," Bravo said.

Grace Cantal-Albasin, PDI Mindanao Bureau

60 youth trained on theater arts

CITY OF CALAPAN—Sixty selected youth, including out-of-school youths and Mangyans, recently trained on theater arts and bonded under the Kalahi Cultural Services for the Poor at the Saclag Ecological School in San Teodoro town, Oriental Mindoro. The Mangyan youth moved fellow participants, facilitators and watchers into tears with their presentation that depicted their experiences of being discriminated against. Supervised by the National Commission on Culture and the Arts, the program has been conducted in Quezon, Masbate, Marinduque, Sorsogon, Albay and Laguna among others. It will be conducted next in Romblon.

Madonna T. Virola, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Robbers kill guard, take P.6M in heist

CALAMBA, Laguna—A security guard was killed when four unidentified robbers ransacked a gas station in Cabuyao, Laguna, and ran away with P600,000 cash just before dawn on Tuesday. Chief Supt. Jesus Versoza, Calabarzon police director, identified the victim as Mario Pagumata, the lone overnight security personnel of Petron gasoline station in Barangay Banay-banay. Versoza said the gasoline station's employees called up the Cabuyao police office at around 4 a.m. after they found Pagumata's body near Petron's main office. He said initial investigation showed that a few hours before Pagumata was found dead, at least four unidentified suspects alighted from a vehicle and went inside the main office of the gas station where the money was kept. Versoza said Pagumata tried to go after the suspects but was hit by a hard object. The victim, he said, died from internal hemorrhage.

Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

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INQUIRER Southern Luzon

Editor Jun Bandayrel
Bureau Chief Floreño G. Solmirano

War photos capture Bicolano heroism

By Gil Francis G. Arevalo
Legazpi City

BICOL played a significant role in the country's liberation from Japanese forces during World War II, but only a few know of this, says Erlinda Belleza, curator of the Legazpi City Museum in Albay.

Only a handful of historical accounts exist, narrating the martyrdom and heroism of the Bicolanos during the landing of American soldiers in the country through Legazpi on April 1, 1945, Belleza said.

The landing "served as the focal point in the liberation of the entire region," she added. It was followed by successive operations in other parts of Bicol during the whole month of April.

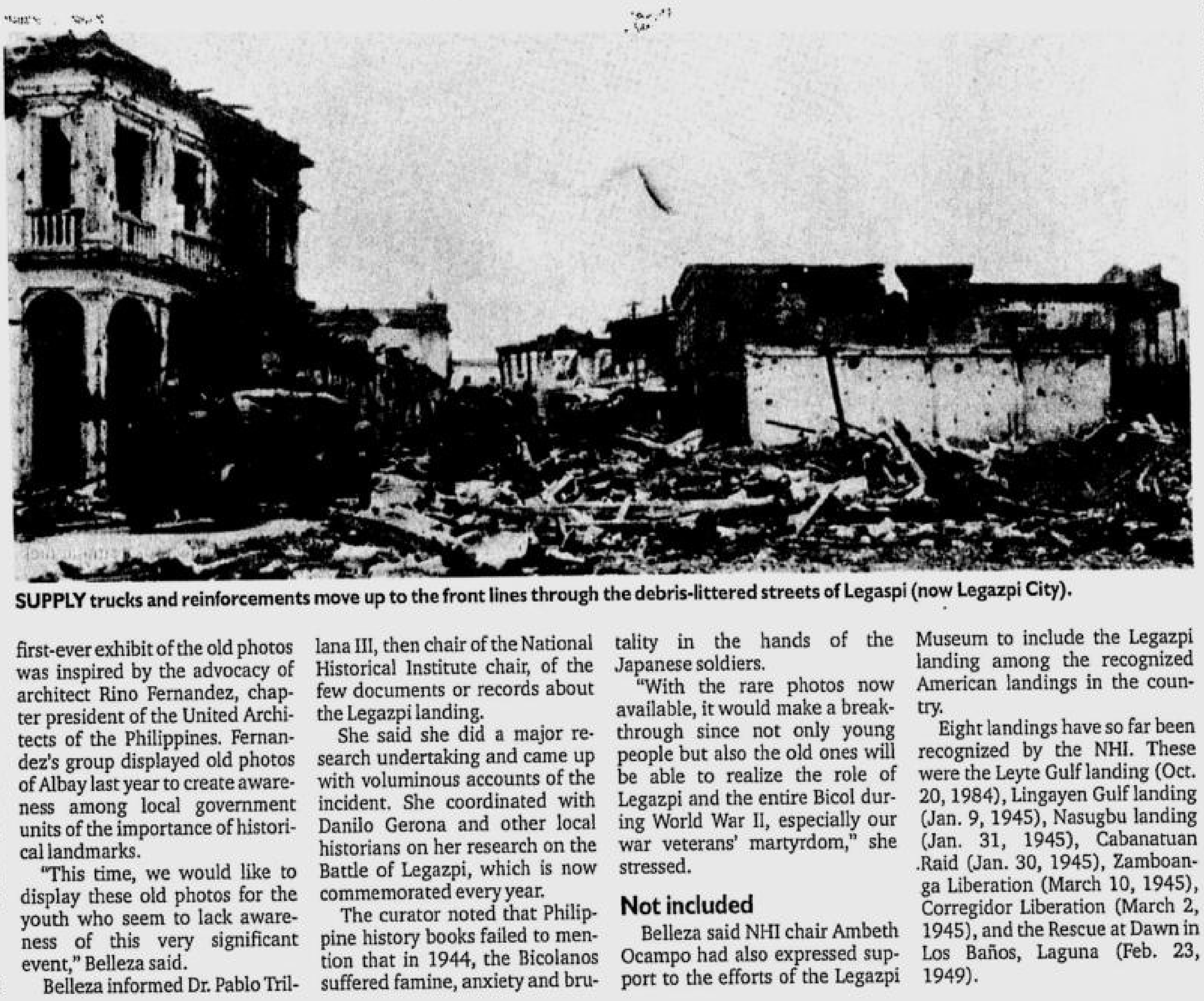
In an effort to fill the "historical vacuum," Belleza plans to display at least 19 rare photos of the American landings.

The photos were donated by Dr. Ricardo Jose, chair of the history department of the University of the Philippines in Diliman, Quezon City. They originated from the Arizona Military Museum, which, Belleza said, was the only museum in the US that recognized the initiative of Legazpi to locate old photos and other war artifacts and records.

Jose co-authored the book, "The Philippines under Japan," with Japanese writer Ikehata Setsuho.

BULLDOZERS fill up shell and bomb craters on Legazpi beach.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF LEGAZPI MUSEUM



SUPPLY trucks and reinforcements move up to the front lines through the debris-littered streets of Legaspi (now Legazpi City).

Reminder

"Now 60 years after Legazpi's liberation, we finally have old photos of the event that we can make available to remind the Bicolanos today of the heroic deeds of their grandfathers," Belleza said.

No other photos are available in the region, except for that of the US landing in Barangay Rawis.

Among the historical photos are those of Mt. Mayon shrouded by clouds as American troops landed in Legazpi; a closer view of of buildings in the port after bombardment; infantrymen passing by a burned Japanese truck; a command post at Legazpi (now the Philippine National Railways terminal); people waiting in line for their rice rations near Daraga; engineers filling bomb craters in Legazpi using bulldozers; and the Rawis landing.

Awareness

Belleza's plan to mount the first-ever exhibit of the old photos was inspired by the advocacy of architect Rino Fernandez, chapter president of the United Architects of the Philippines. Fernandez's group displayed old photos of Albay last year to create awareness among local government units of the importance of historical landmarks.

"This time, we would like to display these old photos for the youth who seem to lack awareness of this very significant event," Belleza said.

Belleza informed Dr. Pablo Trillana III, then chair of the National Historical Institute chair, of the few documents or records about the Legazpi landing.

She said she did a major research undertaking and came up with voluminous accounts of the incident. She coordinated with Danilo Gerona and other local historians on her research on the Battle of Legazpi, which is now commemorated every year.

The curator noted that Philippine history books failed to mention that in 1944, the Bicolanos suffered famine, anxiety and brutality in the hands of the Japanese soldiers.

"With the rare photos now available, it would make a breakthrough since not only young people but also the old ones will be able to realize the role of Legazpi and the entire Bicol during World War II, especially our war veterans' martyrdom," she stressed.

Not included

Belleza said NHI chair Ambeth Ocampo had also expressed support to the efforts of the Legazpi Museum to include the Legazpi landing among the recognized American landings in the country.

Eight landings have so far been recognized by the NHI. These were the Leyte Gulf landing (Oct. 20, 1984), Lingayen Gulf landing (Jan. 9, 1945), Nasugbu landing (Jan. 31, 1945), Cabanatuan Raid (Jan. 30, 1945), Zamboanga Liberation (March 10, 1945), Corregidor Liberation (March 2, 1945), and the Rescue at Dawn in Los Baños, Laguna (Feb. 23, 1949).

"It's quite ironic that while the Bicol landing has been considered the last amphibious American landing, it is not included among these noted landings. But we're happy that Ocampo is very supportive of us," Belleza said.

The Legazpi landing was followed by that in Masbate (April 3, 1945), Sorsogon (April 6, 1945). Iriga (April 14, 1945), Daet in Camarines Norte (April 21, 1945) and Naga (April 28, 1945).

Records from the Arizona Museum showed that Gen. Douglas MacArthur wanted Lt. Walter Krueger, the officer he assigned to lead the Bicol attack, to land in Legazpi for safety and security reasons.

MacArthur knew that the Japanese maintained coveys of suicide crafts and various hideouts along the southern coast of Luzon and the southern shore of the Bicol Peninsula.

He also knew that the Japanese had put in place artillery on the south coast of Luzon, the Bicol Peninsula, some of the small islands in the Visayan passages, and northern Samar, the records showed. Legazpi is at the southern extremity of Luzon.

Albay Gulf provided a large protected anchorage area and gave the 158th Regimental Combat Team the best chance to overwhelm Japanese forces in Sorsogon and control the San Bernardo Strait.

From 2,000 to 3,000 Japanese soldiers defended the area with heavy artillery, aside from mines planted in the gulf, the records added.

Tribute

Belleza said the rare photos would affirm the construction of a commemorative pylon at the actual landing site in Rawis.

Built by the city government on April 1, 1997, the pylon also honors the city's fallen heroes and veterans. It has two plate masses tapering upward and leaning on each other, representing the joint Filipino guerrilla and US forces that triumphed in the liberation of the people of Legazpi and Albay.

The west plate represents the Philippine forces guarding the land and struggling for freedom even before the coming of the American forces, while the east plate represents the US forces that landed from the sea.

The tapering plates symbolize the cooperation and partnership of the two forces toward victory.

Sister Doyet, first Mangyan missionary nun

By Madonna T. Virola
Naujan, Oriental Mindoro

HER PEOPLE had never thought that one of them could be a Holy Spirit sister. So it made community history when Doyet M. Luarca took her vows as the first Mangyan of the Hanunuo group to become a missionary nun.

More than 500 Mangyan people, friends, nuns and priests witnessed Luarca made her pledge on May 1 in a ceremony mixed with Mangyan rituals in a centuries-old church at the foot of Mount Halcon in Barangay Paitan, Naujan, Oriental Mindoro.

"It's the first time that the ceremony is conducted outside of our convent. We wanted Doyet's family, relatives, friends and the Mangyan community to participate," said Sr. Milagros Sandoval, provincial leader of the Servants of the Holy Spirit-Philippine North.

The Holy Spirit sisters from Manila, even the older ones, came in full force, enthusiastic to welcome a Mangyan to their congregation.

Bishop Warlito Cajandig, who was proud to wear his miter for the first time in 16 years, led a group of diocesan priests and novices, and missionaries of the Society of the Divine Word (SVD).

A truckful of Mangyan people arrived from Dangkalan, an islet in the southernmost part of Oriental Mindoro, in Bulalacao town. Their leaders, Ana Galicia and Badang Isidro, said they were proud that one of them was now part a congregation which has been serving them for the past 33 years.

"From being administered, the Mangyan is now a co-administrator," said Fr. Ewald Dinter, SVD, director of the Mangyan Mission-Oriental Mindoro.

Strong decision

At first, Luarca's family objected to her choice of vocation. They had expected her, the fifth in a brood of nine children, to help them in household chores in Dangkalan.

"She was simple but determined, so many were surprised about her decision," said Sr. Cristeta Pias, her formator.

"I thought about becoming a nun while in second year high school, struck by the sisters from the Siervas de San Jose who conducted our retreat," Luarca recalled.

Later, she learned more about the Holy Spirit sisters while working with them for seven years as a teacher in a Tugdaan school in Naujan.

Luarca grew up like other Mangyan girls who loved to climb trees and mountains, unmindful of getting dirty. She obtained a degree of Bachelor of Science in Education at the Divine Word College in Calapan City, the provincial capital, and supported her younger siblings in school from a teaching job.

"*Marunong ang Diyos sa kagandahan* (God knows of the beautiful)," 77-year-old Ulim, a community leader, remarked on his daughter's entering the mission.

"Sister Doyet's decision was unconventional of the many Mangyan women who end up taking care of the household," said Gabby Oybad, who could be the first Mangyan priest.

Indigenous ceremony

Dinter said Luarca's taking of her vows was "historic in a Mindoro church, which has been there since 1572. The Mangyan-designed church is decorated with flowers, fruits and plants, as well as tribal products.

During the ceremony, Luarca was brought to the altar like a bride by her father. Both were in full Mangyan attire

As part of a Mangyan ritual, a fire was lit before a procession entered the chapel to rid the surroundings of bad spirits. Earlier, a *budyong*(horn) was blown three times.

After the homily, Uliw, Dinter and Sandoval gave their blessings and reminders. After they spoke, Luarca was presented the habit and veil. While she changed her attire, a gong was played for the dance of celebration and thanksgiving.

During the offertory, fire, fruits, soil, a Mangyan dress, cross, the Constitution of the Holy Spirit sisters, bread and wine were brought to the altar.

Luarca took her vows, signed the "*kasulatan* (documents)" and rendered a thanksgiving song.

Many Mangyan people watched in awe at the ceremony.

More vows

Luarca will be going to a school in Tagbilaran City in Bohol this month to witness her two batchmates take their vows before the provincial leader of the Servants of the Holy Spirit-Philippine South.

LUARCA

She will renew her vows every year until the fifth or sixth year when she will profess her perpetual vows before the international congregational leadership of the Holy Spirit based in Rome.

As a missionary nun, she may be assigned to other countries. She also looks forward to being able to serve her Mangyan community someday—as a full-pledged nun.

INQBOX Question of the Week

More than 90 journalists have been killed in the Philippines since 1986. The Committee to Protect Journalists has identified the Philippines as "the most murderous country for journalists," followed by Iraq, Colombia, Bangladesh and Russia. What should be done to end the killings?

Win this "Inquirer mug

Senders of d best 20 texts as publishd in Tuesday's INQBOX *wiL each receiv an "Inquirer Mug! Ü*

Key in: inquirer box name/age/city/message. Text your answers to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart). (Maximum of 160 characters)

"Metro Manila winners can call Jane at 8978808. Provincial winners can text: inquirer ad name/age/city/mailing address to 2207 or 283 as their prizes will be mailed to them.

Suspect in Quezon journalist's killing arrested

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—Police yesterday presented the alleged leader of a criminal gang behind the ambush-slaying of Quezon broadcaster Apolinario "Polly" Pobeda two years ago.

They also announced the filing of murder charges against seven persons involved in the killing of Arnulfo Villanueva, a newspaper columnist, in Cavite in February.

Chief Supt. Jesus Versoza, Calabarzon police director, said Joven Geron, the prime suspect in the Poveda killing, was arrested by members of the Regional Intelligence Office in a cockpit in San Juan, Batangas on April 23. Geron carried a P300,000 reward for his arrest.

Another suspected gang member, identified as Noel Gonzalbo, surrendered áfter the arrest.

Geron allegedly headed the Dueñas group whose members were believed to be behind the killing of Pobeda, 35, on May 17, 2003, while he was on his way to radio station dwTI-AM in Lucena City.

Aside from assassination missions, the group, which operates in Quezon and Batangas, was involved in at least 19 incidents of robbery, bank holdup, car theft and hijacking operations in the last two years, according to Supt. Rustico Bascuguin, Calabarzon police public information officer.

He said the suspect was arrested by virtue of a warrant issued by a Quezon court for the victim of another gun-slaying, Willy Sison, an alleged drug dealer in the province, in May, 2003.

"We are still verifying his real participation in the killing of Poveda. We are still studying evidence against him," Versoza said in a news conference. "His arrest ends a long and protracted intelligence dragnet operation targeting safehouses and patterned routes frequented by the group."

Geron denied any involvement in the murder, but admitted that he personally knew Leonides Alcantara, the alleged gunman.

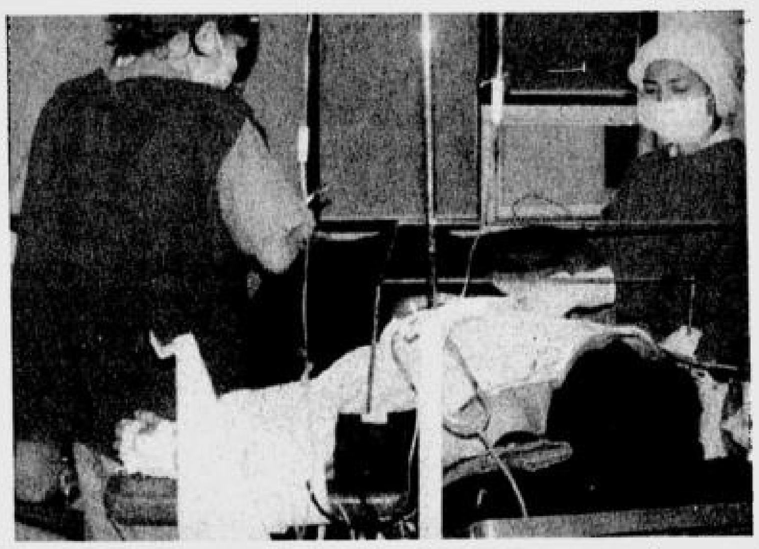
The regional Criminal Investigation and Detection Group said it had already filed murder charges against seven persons in connection with the killing of Villanueva, a columnist for community paper Asian Star Express Balita, on Feb, 28. One of the suspects is the victim's common-law wife identified only as Anne.

Supt. Mario Sanga, CIDG Calabarzon director, said among those charged were Jose Allan Tayson, Mencio Argente and Anne.

But Sanga said his group was officially treating the incident as "not job-related."

"Our evidence showed that the case was more of a personal grudge than a professional incident," he said. "In our own humble way, this could be our gift to journalists on the occasion of the World Press Freedom Day the other day."

Sanga said the victim drew the ire of the suspects after he traded his unserviceable .38 cal. revolver for Tayson's refrigerator. *Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*



RUSHED to the Dipolog Medical Center, Klein Cantoneros underwent emergency surgery. He was hit twice in the back, three times in the stomach and once in the left leg. COURTESY OF MINDANAO OBSERVER

Taruc dies of heart failure; 92

From page A1

sa Hapon (Hukbalahap) had been confined at St. Luke's since May 1 after suffering a heart attack, his family said.

"His condition deteriorated, he couldn't talk. He would just move his eyes," the former rebel leader's only son, Dr. Romeo Taruc, told the INQUIRER.

The elder Taruc died at 6:10 p.m., the son said.

At his bedside when he died were his secretary, Matilde Malonzo, a niece and a former secretary, Malonzo said.

"He died quietly," Malonzo said.

Last speech

Until his heart attack, Taruc appeared well, delivering a speech on Tuesday last week at the Philippine Normal University during a youth empowerment convention.

He was to have turned 93 on June 21. He had been undergoing dialysis because his kidneys were not functioning normally.

Taruc's wake is to be held at Funeraria Paz on Araneta Avenue in Quezon City.

Meeting with Aquino

He is to be buried on Sunday at the Loyola Memorial Park after a Mass to be held at the Sto. Domingo Church.

Born in 1913, Taruc led the communist group Hukbalahap from 1942 to 1954.

Fighting the government

On May 17, 1954, after four months of negotiations, he surrendered to then reporter Benigno Aquino Jr., who was acting as emissary of the late President Ramon Magsaysay.

After his surrender, Taruc was tried in court and sentenced to 12 years in prison.

In the 1930s, after studying in Manila, Taruc became involved in the case of landless families. He joined the Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas in 1935.

Returning to the mountains of Central Luzon after World War II, Taruc strengthened the communist movement with the support of farmers and rural folk.

At its popularity, the Hukbalahap reached a fighting strength of 10,000 to 15,000, harassing some 40,000 government soldiers.

In November 1948, the Hukbalahap changed its name to Hukbong Magpapalaya ng Bayan (HMB). *With a report from Jun Malig, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Another journalist shot, fights for life

From page A1

this crime," Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye told dzMM radio in Manila.

Another task force

Malacañang directed Chief Supt. Vidal Querol, police chief for Western Mindanao, to look into the ambush. Querol arrived in Dipolog yesterday afternoon and created the Task Force Cantoneros.

"We are looking at several angles, including his hard-hitting commentaries over his radio program," said Supt. Tomas Hizon, Dipolog police chief and task force head.

Hizon said Cantoneros was riding on his motorcycle when shot twice in the back, three times in the belly, and once in the left leg. Police recovered eight empty shell casings from a .45 cal. pistol at the crime scene.

Zacarito Zamora, director of the Philippine Information Agency in Zamboanga del Norte, said Cantoneros was "bent on surviving" after he was shot.

Favored targets: Politicians

Zamora said the victim managed to crawl and hide in the bushes for two hours. Cantoneros sought help from a passerby, who brought him to the hospital, he said. He did not disclose the source of the information.

Jett Opilac, manager of station dxAA-FM, said Cantoneros started his program in March last year and had been hosting a 7 a.m. to 9 a.m. daily program at the station.

"He is barely two years in the business and he is not even a member of the Dipolog Press Club," Zamora said.

But, he said, Cantoneros is the "only hard-hitting radio commentator in Dipolog and his favorite personalities are politicians." The radio station is owned by the family of former Zamboanga del Norte Gov. Isagani Amatong.

Cantoneros "has been hitting governors, mayors and other officials identified with the politicians that are political nemesis of the Amatongs," Zamora added.

Bert Laput, associate editor of Mindanao Observer, confirmed that Cantoneros was very critical of the administration of Zamboanga del Norte Gov. Rolando Yebes and Dapitan City Mayor Dominador Jalosjos, younger brother of convicted rapist Rep. Romeo Jalosjos.

Both officials could not be reached for comment as of press time.

Grim figures

Since 1986, 66 Filipino journalists have been murdered, 13 of them last year. Three journalists have been killed this year and several others survived attacks, according to the National Union of Journalists of the Philippines (NUJP).

On Maundy Thursday, the crusading journalist Marlene Esperat was killed in her home while having dinner in Tacurong City in Sultan Kudarat province.

On the day Esperat's alleged killers were presented to the media, broadcast journalist Alberto Martinez of North Cotabato was ambushed. On Friday, broadcast journalist Nestor Seguismundo of Ilocos Sur was also shot.

In Guimaras, Philippine National Police Director General Arturo Lomibao yesterday acknowledged the tag that the country was the most murderous place for journalists.

"This could be true based on the statistics," Lomibao told reporters in the capital town of Jordan during the opening of the First Gentleman's Cup, a national shooting contest, at the Guimaras Adventure Park.

As in the past, the PNP chief said police were investigating and prosecuting the cases of murdered journalists, but he said the resolution of the cases had been hindered by the lack of witnesses. "So we cannot investigate and prosecute," he said.

He said many of the killings were work-related and were perpetrated by persons or groups that were "hurt" by reports and commentaries.

Witness protection

Malacañang took a similar tack in addressing the continued killings of journalists in the country. It pressed for witnesses to help police find the killers.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita encouraged witnesses to come out and help in the police investigation. "You can be very sure that there are people who were around when these things happened," he said in his weekly news conference.

"Don't be afraid. I encouraged you to come out in the open. You can be sure that this thing would be attended to with special attention," he added.

Ermita assured the public that the government was doing its best to solve the murders of journalists who were killed in retaliation for their work and that it would not tolerate this kind of killings.

He said journalists were being killed as "part of the consequences of doing what they're doing."

"But government will definitely not go for it. Government will not tolerate it. Government is doing something to account for the perpetrators and will continue to strengthen its measures to protect and secure our members of mass media," he said.

Gov't not running away

The government, he said, "was not running away" from the fact that many members of the media had been killed through the years.

But Press Secretary Bunye said the international press reports were "unfair and exaggerated."

"Press freedom is fully protected and media practitioners may ask the police for special protection if their lives are under threat," he said in a statement. *Hernan P. dela Cruz and Julie S. Alipala with a report from Joselle Badilla, PDI Mindanao Bureau; Nestor P. Burgos Jr., PDI Visayas Bureau; Christine O. Avendaño in Manila; and AFP*

Zamboanga del Norte: Hot spot for journalists

ZAMBOANGA CITY—Radio broadcaster Klein Cantoneros is the fifth media practitioner to be attacked by gunmen in Zamboanga del Norte, according to Edgar Sorronda, president of the Dipolog Press Club.

Jacobo Amatong, editor in chief of the Mindanao Observer, and human rights lawyer Zorro Aguilar, who was also editor of the Nandao Today, were killed by suspected military personnel in 1983.

In 1992, Rafael Cimafranca, a reporter of the Mindanao Observer, was killed by a suspected member of a drug syndicate in Piñan town.

On Feb. 2, 1996, lawyer Ferdinand Reyes, editor in chief of the Press Freedom, was shot dead in his home.

These killings have remained unsolved.

Cantoneros is fighting for his life at the Dipolog Medical Center. *Julie S. Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Names of 9 RP journalists added to press freedom memorial

From page A1

Sept. 29; Allan Dizon, The Freeman and Banat, Nov. 27.

Rowell Endrinal, dzRC and Bicol Metro News, Feb. 11; Herson Hinolan, Bombo Radyo, Nov. 13; Gene Boyd Lumawag, MindaNews, Nov. 12; Arnnel Manalo, dzRH, Aug. 5; Rogelio Mariano, Radyo Natin-Aksyon Radyo, July 31; and Eldy Sablas, dxJR-FM, Oct. 19.

Overall, 2004 was the third deadliest year for the journalism profession in nearly two centuries, according to the Freedom Forum, a nonprofit foundation which rededicates the memorial each year to mark World Press Freedom Day. More journalists were killed worldwide in 1991 and 1994.

The Iraq war last year claimed the lives of 25 journalists, including a CNN producer, a Polish television correspondent and an Italian freelancer who was kidnapped and murdered by a militant group. Half of the journalists killed last year were murdered because of their work.

At the Arlington ceremony, speakers noted a global trend of targeting journalists and they criticized authorities for sometimes failing to fully investigate such killings.

Marches, sit-ins

"We should direct some of our anger, some of our energy toward those governments who condone these killings, or who look the other way," said CNN correspondent Judy Woodruff.

CLAIRE Martin, daughter of freelance photographer, R. Scott Martin, is accompanied by her mother, Patricia, as they leave yellow roses at the Freedom Forum Journalists Memorial during a ceremony to honor journalists who died in 2004, the third most deadly year since 1812, in commemoration of World Press Freedom Day at Freedom Park May 3, 2005 in Arlington, Virginia. AFP

On World Press Freedom Day, journalists even in press-hostile countries, held marches and sit-ins Tuesday to demand an end to the threats that media workers face—killings, prison, kidnapping, government censorship and other abuses.

"We will not be cowed. We will not be silenced," the National Union of Journalists of the Philippines vowed in a statement. The NUJP said 23 journalists were killed there in the past three years, and a total of 66 have been murdered since the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos was ousted in 1986.

In Pakistan where violence against reporters is common, baton-swinging police arrested 30 journalists who marked the 15th annual World Press Freedom Day by protesting outside parliament in the capital, Islamabad, witnesses said. They were later released.

Chanting "free detained journalists. Reinstate press freedom," 1,500 reporters also marched through the capital of Nepal. Dozens of reporters have been arrested since King Gyanendra seized power in February, and 12 remain in jail.

Scores of police officers watched the protest in Katmandu but did not intervene. Journalists are barred from criticizing the king, his government and the security forces. Independent radio stations have been banned from broadcasting any news.

Kenyan first lady

Kenyan First Lady Lucy Kibaki and her security detail showed scant regard for the global day of campaigning, storming the Nairobi office of the nation's largest newspaper early Tuesday, triggering a confrontation where she allegedly slapped a television cameraman and demanded the arrest of another reporter and his editor, witnesses said.

The wife of President Mwai Kibaki also seized notebooks, tape recorders and cameras of reporters covering her protest at The Daily Nation's offices, said Wangethi Mwangi, the newspaper's editorial director.

"This is one of those coincidences that helps to highlight the difficulties we face all the time," he said. "This sort of intrusion into our freedoms sends shivers down your spine."

Government spokesperson Alfred Mutua refused to comment on the incident.

Ms Kibaki was protesting stories carried in Kenya's daily papers over the weekend that she tried to pull the plug on a party on Friday for the outgoing country director for the World Bank, whose residence is next door to the president's private home, Mwangi said. According to the reports, she felt the music was too loud and wanted police to stop it.

Media groups in Africa spent the day focusing attention on restrictive laws, such as Kenya's criminal libel law, which African leaders use to quash dissent.

Most African nations also have so-called "insult laws," which forbid media from any reporting that could be considered derogatory to the country's leadership.

New threats in Africa

The Paris-based campaign group, Reporters Without Borders, which helped set up the annual observance, said new threats had emerged in places like Africa and Bangladesh.

The group said 53 journalists were killed on the job in 2004, the most in a decade. It said 56 journalists or their assistants have been killed in Iraq since the war began more than two years ago—only seven fewer than during the conflict in Vietnam from 1955 to 1975.

"This has been an extremely bad year for press freedom," said the group's president, Robert Menard. "Of course, it's in Iraq that the majority of journalists are dying. But there also journalists being killed in Peru, Mexico, the Philippines—outside of war zones."

Another 107 journalists were imprisoned as of Jan. 1, the group said. They included Shi Tao, one of 27 held in China, and Ricardo Gonzalez Alfonso, who is serving 20 years in prison in Cuba and is one of 22 journalists imprisoned there.

Murderer regimes

In Sweden, under a cold rain and a banner marked "Free Dawit," journalists and campaigners held a 24-hour vigil in Stockholm and handed out fliers to demand the release of reporter Dawit Isaak, a Swede imprisoned in his native Eritrea since 2001 after he called for press freedom there.

"It's sad that this is needed," said Bengt Braun, head of the Swedish Newspaper Publishers' Association. "But we need to put pressure on these murderer regimes who imprison people for their opinions."

Hostages in Iraq

Others are hostages. They include Florence Aubenas, a French reporter last seen leaving her Baghdad hotel on Jan. 5, and Marie-Jeanne Ion, one of three Romanians kidnapped in the Iraqi capital March 28 along with their Iraqi-American translator, Mohammed Monaf. *AP*

GMA confronted Roy Señeres on 'plot'

US ENVOY Ricciardone: Meeting with chums

FORMER Ambassador Señeres: Coffe talk

PRESIDENT Arroyo was suspicious.

From page A1

Señeres admitted he had been meeting with US Ambassador Francis Ricciardone and other ranking officials of the embassy but said he met them "because they are my friends."

"We have coffee and we talk about the 5 million unemployed Filipinos here, and the millions of Filipinos who [have found] work abroad. We talk facts. Is that destabilization?" Señeres said.

In one or two of the coffee talks, he said he was joined by a retired Air Force colonel who had been linked to groups allegedly plotting Ms Arroyo's ouster.

"But he is just military bum," Señeres said.

According to Señeres, a Cabinet official who thought he was interested in the official's post, twisted the incidents and whispered the "intrigue" to the President.

GMA should have checked

"And the problem with the President was that she believed it without even checking with Isafp [Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines] and the Nica [National Intelligence Coordinating Agency]," Señeres said.

He said he had been helping First Gentleman Mike Arroyo reach out to overseas workers, which the President's husband considers among his pet projects.

"I helped him especially at that time when Senator [Panfilo] Lacson named him as the owner of the multimillion-peso Jose Pidal accounts. I could not be a destabilizer," Señeres stressed.

An INQUIRER source said that Ms Arroyo, in a meeting with labor leaders last week, told them that Señeres was involved in efforts to undermine her leadership.

Ricciardone's help

The source said that the President "fumed" at Señeres for allegedly asking Ricciardone to support plans to oust her.

The source also quoted Ms Arroyo as saying, "*Akala ni Roy hindi ko alam* (Roy thinks that I don't know)."

But Señeres said Ms Arroyo had already confronted him about the report during a meeting on April 5, her birthday.

"*Nagtaray siya* [She put on a haughty air]. It was very unpresidential. But I explained that I was just having coffee with the embassy officials, and I have been doing these for years," he said.

Señeres said he had cultivated the friendship of US senators, congressmen and state department officials while he was assigned as labor attache in Washington, D.C. from 1990 to 1994, and later on as ambassador to the United Arab Emirates, where he would be known for saving teenage OFW Sarah Balabagan and death convict John Aquino from execution.

Suspicions raked up again

In 2000, President Joseph Estrada appointed Señeres to the NLRC, a position he continues to hold under the Arroyo administration.

Ms Arroyo was apparently not satisfied with Señeres' explanation on April 5 because she raked up the same suspicions during the April 26 meeting.

Señeres, who was not in the meeting, said "50 percent of the labor leaders" at the meeting called him up.

He said many teased him about the plot, and others even joked that they would like to join.

GMA misinformed?

On a separate issue, Señeres said Ms Arroyo was misinformed when she ordered the transfer of the supervision of the NLRC from her office to the Department of Labor and Employment to speed up the disposition of labor cases.

Señeres said that in order to truly address the concerns of both labor and management, "we need more support from government, not more supervision."

Señeres said that, in the first place, the Supreme Court had not yet ruled on the constitutionality of the President's Executive Order No. 105 mandating DOLE to exercise administrative supervision of the commission.

"The President was fed with the wrong information about the NLRC. We have not been consulted about that speech. In fact we were not invited to the Malacañang function," Señeres added, referring to the Labor Day rites when the Chief Executive made the announcement.

SC ruling

The NLRC chief said the case filed by the Automotive Industry Workers Alliance and several other labor groups questioning the validity of the executive order was dismissed by the High Tribunal on a mere technicality.

The Supreme Court in an en banc decision in January said the issue "will have to await the proper party in a proper case to assail its validity."

Prior to the ruling, however, Malacañang issued another directive, EO 204, in an attempt to cure the legal defects of EO 105.

Señeres said the two EOs were not the solution to the problem of undue delays in the NLRC's resolution of labor cases.

"The real problem is the lack of government support in improving our capacity to handle the tsunami of labor cases being filed daily," he said. *With a report from Jerome Aning*

Palace admits asking Yorac about her plans but denies pressuring her to quit

EXECUTIVE Secretary Eduardo Ermita yesterday denied that Haydee Yorac, the resigned chair of the Presidential Commission on Good Government, was pressured to resign.

Ermita confirmed, however, that his office did ask Yorac whether she intended to stay on or quit, but this was done out of concern for her health and nothing more.

Yorac, whose resignation took effect April 30, told the INQUIRER last week that Palace emissaries were dispatched to ask her to resign after she opposed the Malacañang-backed projects on the coconut levy funds.

She said Ermita sent Merciditas Gutierrez, the President's chief legal counsel, and later his deputy, Joaquin Lagonera, to ask when she intended to step down.

She said she actually began to feel the pressure from the Palace in the last quarter of 2004, following her return from the United States for treatment of cancer and a mild stroke.

In his weekly press conference yesterday, Ermita said he did send people, including Lagonera, to talk to Yorac and "asked about her plans on either continuing or quitting as chair of PCGG."

"If she considers that pressure, then that is her own assessment," he said.

He said Yorac had told his emissaries that she intended to resign and in her "initial" resignation, "she just mentioned that she would like to go back to private life."

"It is her own perception that she was being pressured but you know it is my job to find out from members of the Cabinet who for one reason or another would have to be sounded off what their plans are in the near future, of their staying on [in] office or wanting to return to civilian life," Ermita said.

Asked why his office had to ask Yorac whether she would want to stay or quit, Ermita said: "I mentioned that the good chairman was afflicted with some illness...we asked her, how do you feel right now, something like that, are you disposed to stay longer?"

It could be that Yorac thought that she was being pressured to quit when he sent Lagonera to talk to her, he said.

"We had to elicit from her what her plans were. It was just an initiative we had to take to find out from her exactly what she wanted to do," Ermita said.

Ermita also denied that Yorac's stance on the coco levy funds had anything to do with his move to ask her about her plans. *Christine Avendaño*

Meaning of destabilizer, according to Ermita

From page A1

one who links the First Family to "jueteng."

But not if one is a bishop.

Such a definition was put forward yesterday by Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita.

In the last three days, eight Church leaders led by Bishops Julio Xavier Labayen, Deogracias Iniguez and Antonio Tobias have expressed their support to the Kilusang Makabansang Ekonomiya's (KME) calling for an immediate change in the government while Archbishop Oscar Cruz has been summoned to a congressional hearing investigating on jueteng, including the alleged involvement of First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo, Rep. Mikey Arroyo and Rep. Ignacio Arroyo.

Left or opposition

"I don't want to believe that a bishop would allow himself to be used as a destabilizer. It could very well be part of destabilization if it came from the people we know like the left or opposition. Then I can say they are using them to destroy the government," Ermita said in an interview with reporters.

"A person of the stature of a bishop will not voluntarily engage in destabilizing activities especially since he is conscious of the separation of the church and state where the church should not be involved in matters of the state," Ermita said.

Discrediting gov't

When asked if the bishops could have been unwittingly used as pawns by destabilizers, Ermita said: "That is highly possible."

On the jueteng issue, Ermita said that "when a few members of the official family of the President are reported to be involved in some irregularities whether proven or not even" it would not be "far fetched" to assume that this was part of destabilization efforts.

"As far as I know, this thing (jueteng) is being thrown as part of the effort to discredit the administration. Anything that they can think of that would downgrade the stature of government will be thrown in this direction," Ermita said. "We cannot totally discount that this is done by design by some people."

But Ermita stressed that he was not calling Cruz a destabilizer.

Evidence first

"The bishop (Cruz) has his own ways of putting things together and making up a report but let there be evidence of things before accusing anybody. But because of his calling as a bishop, I don't think he would voluntarily want to be in a situation where he could be a destabilizer.

"The act itself could be part of a destabilization effort but individuals involved may have their own agenda," Ermita said. "Anything negative will be welcomed by all enemies of this administration who want this government to fail."

The eight bishops have sympathized with KME's agenda largely because they believe a change in administration was a solution to the poor's economic hardships while Cruz has been a longtime crusader against jueteng.

Rolling with punches

Ermita said Cruz merely wanted the administration to make a firmer stand against illegal acts like jueteng.

But Ermita said the government was willing to roll with the punches on efforts to overthrow the government such as the failed Labor Day coup d'etat which fizzled out after its leader, former Gen. Fortunato Abat, walked out of the groups he was offering to lead.

Like boxing

"This is like the body blows in boxing. We know that we just have to strengthen ourselves so that we will not be weakened because the objective of our detractors is to weaken the government," Ermita said.

When asked if as a boxer, the government was close to a knockout or would finish the entire fight, Ermita said he was confident the President would serve out her full six-year term.

Lomibao, too

In Guimaras, Iloilo, Philippine National Police Director General Arturo Lomibao downplayed calls for the ouster of President Arroyo.

"The PNP and (other security forces) are on top of the situation. By and large, the peace and order remains normal. Our people in the ground maintain a high level of stability," Lomibao told reporters during the opening of the First Gentleman's Cup, a national shooting contest at the Guimaras Adventure Park.

Enough

He said he did not see any basis for calls for the ouster of the President. "Enough of these destabilization … and talks of instability. (These) are not doing any good for our economy."

Lomibao said there are "some very, very few retired generals who are proposing a transition revolutionary [government]," referring to Abat.

But Lomibao said they have drawn little support and even former President Fidel Ramos whom Abat served as defense secretary has rejected the calls to change the President.

No report on Erap

He assured the loyalty and support of the entire PNP to the government, saying that he had not received reports of disenchantment in the ranks.

When asked whether former President Estrada or those loyal to him were involved in the reported destabilization plans, Lomibao said he had not received any report pointing to that. *With a report from Nestor Burgos, Jr. PDI Visayas Bureau*

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Court stops MMDA traffic ticket system

BEATING THE HEAT
Children from a Manila neighborhood enjoy a cool splash as the Philippine weather bureau reported that temperatures in the country has hit a high of 37.5 degrees Celsius on Tuesday.

ERIK ARAZAS

By Tarra V. Quismundo

EVERYBODY seems to be ganging up on the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority.

Still reeling from a Supreme Court ruling prohibiting the MMDA from confiscating drivers' licenses, the agency suffered its latest setback in its campaign to bring order in the metropolis when a lower court stopped two of its traffic enforcement schemes.

The Makati Regional Trial Court (RTC) yesterday issued a permanent injunction against the MMDA's Metropolitan Traffic Ticket (MTT) and the No-Contact Traffic Apprehension (NCTA) schemes.

It was a victory for transport groups that had questioned three MMDA traffic schemes aimed at simplifying traffic apprehension procedures and easing traffic on major thoroughfares.

"While defendants, particularly Fernando, is to be credited [for] his unrelenting efforts to solve the perennial traffic problem in Metro Manila, such endeavors, however ... must always be in accordance with the pertinent provisions of the MMDA law," said RTC Branch 145 Judge Cesar Santamaria, in a 12-page decision.

Santamaria's ruling declared as "void and without binding and legal effect" the MTT, which does away with the confiscation of licenses and allows traffic violators to pay fines at any branch of a local bank.

No MMC approval

The judge said the scheme, implemented through MMDA Memorandum Circular No. 04, was signed solely by MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando, and lacked the approval of the Metro Manila Council (MMC).

He noted that the MMDA had no power to legislate.

The MMC is the MMDA's policy making body composed of Metro Manila's 17 mayors and other local officials.

Even while the NCTA was approved by the MMC, the court favored the claim of complaining transport groups that the scheme was unconstitutional.

The NCTA is a traffic apprehension scheme where traffic enforcer take pictures or video of violators, who are then sent summonses ordering them to pay the necessary fines at a bank.

Only the Organized Bus Route scheme, or OBR, was held as legal by the court since it was approved by the MMC.

Confident that the lower court decision may still be appealed, the MMDA yesterday said it could explore its options to legally rectify the decision to their favor.

"We will find our ways to stop the implementation and stay the execution of the permanent injunction," said MMDA Legal Services Chief Emmanuel de Castro.

He added, "We have not received a copy, and until we do the decision is not enforcible."

More than a week ago, the Supreme Court ruled that the MMDA could not confiscate licenses.

Asked what the MMDA would do next faced with the seemingly conflicting decisions, de Castro said, "Both rulings are not yet final and executory."

He said the agency would observe the status quo.

Cops chasing robbers shoot at wrong van

THESE two families were lucky.

Three members of the Special Weapons and Tactics team pursuing a band of robbers shot at their FX van by mistake in Navotas at dawn yesterday.

Members of the Bagtas and Buera families feel fortunate since none of them were hit when the lawmen opened fire at their vehicle which was then parked at the Shell station along C-3 Road.

With them was a five-year-old girl.

Northern Police District Director Supt. Raul Gonzales said P02 Pedro Reyes, P02 Rigor Yazul and P02 Rodel Ramos were going after suspects who had robbed the A&V bakery at the corner of Sabalo and Larangay Streets, Caloocan City.

Witnesses said the suspects fled on an FX van.

Members of the SWAT spotted the FX van of the Bagtas and Buera families at the Shell station and reportedly opened fire without checking its occupants.

Gonzales said the SWAT members could face frustrated homicide charges. *Nancy C. Carvajal*

LTFRB defers fare hike okay by a few days

By Clarissa S. Batino

DECIDING to approve a different fare hike for Metro Manila public utility vehicles (PUVs) and for those in the provinces, the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) deferred approving a new round of adjustments to jeeps and buses by a few more days.

Transport Secretary Leandro Mendoza said the LTFRB would issue a fare hike approval soon. Many had expected rate adjustments during yesterday's transport summit.

The transport summit attended by owners and drivers of all types of PUVs was organized by the transportation departments.

"There are regions that want only a 50 centavo fare increase while there are provinces that say they don't want an increase. This is an issue that the LTFRB is still trying to reconcile," said the transport chief.

He said the fare hike would surely be granted. The only question is how much and when it would take effect.

Jeeps currently collect a minimum fare of P5.50 for the first 4 kilometers and P1 for every additional km. Ordinary metro buses charge P6 for the first 5 kms. plus P1.25 for every additional km.

LTFRB chair Maria Elena Bautista said a decision would be out on or before the middle of the month to allow jeepneys and buses to implement the fare hike before classes open in June.

"Best effort is to decide within the week or even next week," she said.

Vigor Mendoza, lawyer for the transport groups said that jeepney drivers lose P240 to P270 in income a day for every day of delay in adjusting the fare.

He said this was based on observation that for every P1 increase in the price of diesel a liter, drivers incur an additional cost of P30.

"Diesel prices have gone up by about P9 per liter since the last fare increase a year ago," he said.

His diesel price was based on P27 a liter. But the price has recently gone up to about P29 a liter against P18.10 a liter a year ago when jeeps were allowed to hike the minimum fare by P1.50 and metro buses by P2.

Most jeepney groups were now asking for a P2.50 increase in the minimum fare, plus 25 centavos for every additional kilometer.

Metro bus groups, on the other hand, have filed a joint petition for a P3 increase in the fare for the first 5 kms and 60 centavos for every additional km.

Pasay warden relieved after party

By Fran Katigbak

WOOD, crumpled paper, glass shards, tin cans, bottles, and urine fell from the windows of the Pasay City Jail after inmates held a noise barrage at about 8 a.m. yesterday.

The noise barrage, which lasted for about an hour, was in protest of the removal of warden Supt. Mariano Andres.

Inmates started becoming rowdy when Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) officials arrived to turnover the facility to incoming warden Col. Nestor Velasquez.

Prison windows were shattered and a mediaman was hurt when the inmates threw objects into the front yard, which encloses the office of the Progressive Tri-Media of Pasay City (PTMPC), an organization of media practitioners in the city.

Inmates reportedly blamed media for the relief of Andres after reports that he had allowed the Sigue-Sigue Sputnik gang to hold a party celebrating its anniversary on May 1.

But BJMP director Arturo Alit denied that the relief of Andres was a result of giving consent to the party.

"It's OK for prisoners to hold gatherings because it's part of socialization," Alit explained.

Andres, who has been Pasay warden for seven months, will be transferred to Region 3 as part of a periodical evaluation, Alit said.

The BJMP prohibits alcoholic drinks inside prisons and refuses the entry of children, prostitutes or those who are dressed in sleeveless or provocative clothes.

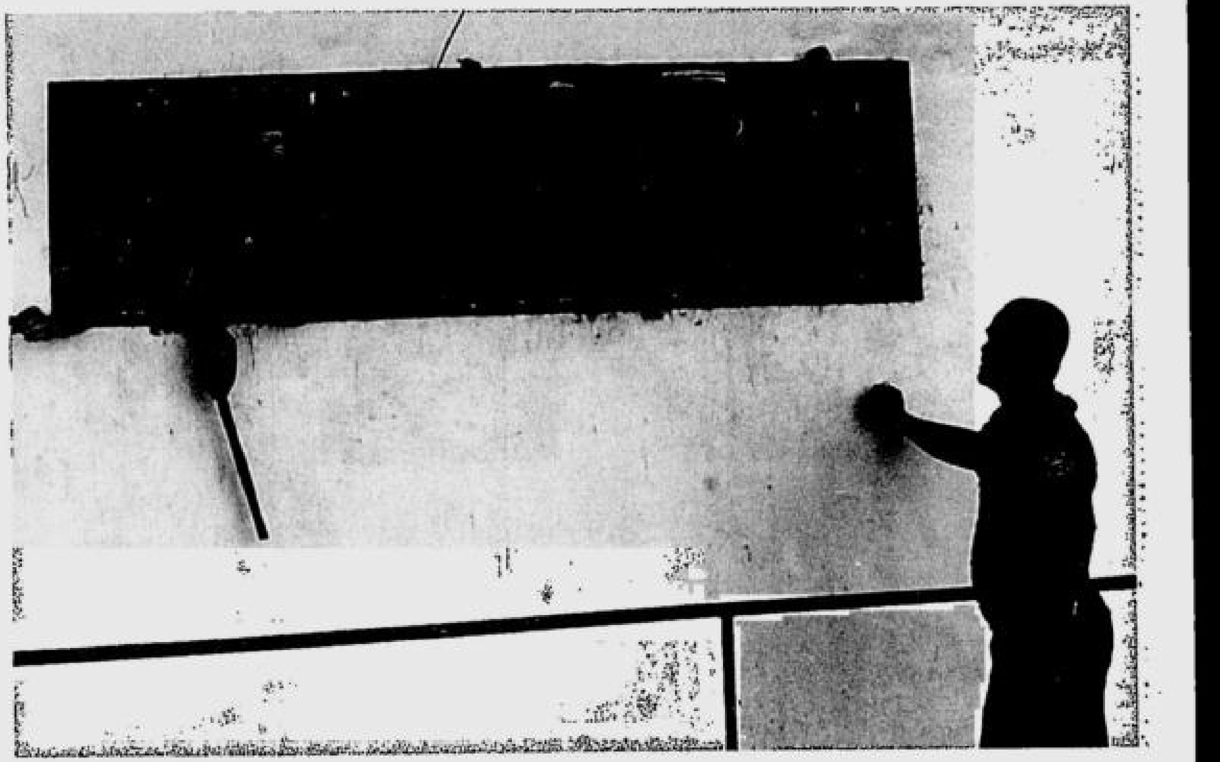
Alit said the BJMP will investigate whether the weekend party violated prison rules and regulations.

Some members of the PTMPC, however, said they saw female "invited guests" enter the city jail during the party.

Joseph Javier, Radyo ng Bayan reporter and PTMPC vice president, claimed he saw three women enter the facility when he visited the tri-media office Sunday night.

He was hurt in the right arm and left leg when pieces of wood, along with beer cans and other objects, were being thrown at the tri-media center.

Similar parties were also held at the Manila and Quezon City jails since these were reportedly already "tradition." *With Margaux C. Ortiz and DJ Yap*



A JAILGUARD tries to dissuade Pasay City inmates from continuing their noise barrage.

ERIK ARAZAS

Archbishop Cruz rides again

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

THE CONTROVERSIAL Oscar Cruz, archbishop of Lingayen-Dagupan archdiocese, appeared before a congressional committee Tuesday and made a fantastic revelation: P13 billion is given in payola to government officials every year.

That's more than P1 billion every month!

But Cruz could not back the figure with numbers or specific amounts given to each official.

He just said that the P13 billion is given to government officials from the national level down to the barangay level.

He just handed the committee on public order and security an envelope containing the names of 14 or 15 jueteng lords. But the list did not include the names of government officials and other people supposedly on the take.

By golly, it's public knowledge who the jueteng lords and financiers are!

What the honorable members of the congressional committee wanted to know was what Cruz could contribute by way of stopping jueteng or minimizing its destructive effects on the nation's moral fiber.

But Cruz, the grandstanding clergyman that he is, went to the committee to hand it the envelope containing the names of jueteng lords and financiers.

He just wasted his time, as well as that of the committee members, because he didn't say anything important, just hearsay.

How did Cruz arrive at that fantastic figure?

He apparently was given another bum steer by some people out to destroy the reputation of top-ranking government officials.

Remember that time Cruz said that guest relations officers (GROs)—euphemism for prostitutes—acted as usherettes during the birthday party of First Gentleman Mike Arroyo at the Malacañang grounds last year?

It turned out those "GROs" were female employees of the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. (Pagcor). They volunteered for the job because—as one of them told me later—they wanted to see the inside of Malacañang. Some of them considered it an honor to be at the party where VIPs were in attendance even if they were there to serve.

The Pagcor female employees were decent people. So, they filed a libel case against Archbishop Cruz.

They knew that nothing would come out of the libel case because Cruz is a man of God. And which silly prosecutor would charge in court one of "God's representatives on earth"?

But file a libel case against Cruz the Pagcor girls did. Some wanted to salvage the honor. The others who are married probably had a big quarrel with their husbands because the archbishop practically called them "prostitutes."

Archbishop Cruz never apologized to the Pagcor ladies even when he learned about his mistake. For a clergyman, not apologizing for a mistake is the height of arrogance.

Now, Archbishop Cruz is yapping again. And who would believe a man who could be compared to the boy who cried "wolf" too often?

***

What's with Sen. Panfilo "Ping" Lacson?

He said he knew the "whistle-blower" in the latest jueteng payola scandal. He said he would invite the police officer (if he really exists) to the Senate hearing and grill him.

But after a few days he said that the whistle-blower didn't have any credibility. So, if the guy didn't have any credibility, why would Lacson expect people to believe the whistle-blower?

Fishermen, Navotas in face-off over dump

By Blanche S. Rivera

FISHERMEN manning a ten-day old barricade on the Obando River warned of a bloody face-off with authorities tomorrow as Navotas Mayor Toby Tiangco ordered the resumption of dumping in Tanza, Navotas.

Protesters expect their number to reach 4,000 by Friday as several barangays in Navotas, and even Obando Mayor Zoilito Santiago, signified their support for the closure of the 10.9-hectare dump.

Oppose Dumpsite spokesperson Bang Palacio said Tiangco had declared in a dialogue with them last Tuesday that the local government would "do what it has to do" to let a trash barge from Pier 18 pass on Friday.

She said this could mean the redeployment of members of the Army's 56th Infantry Battalion and the police's 305th Provincial Mobile Group, who were ordered to break the barricade last week but withdrew as tension increased.

"They say the barricade is illegal, but they're the ones who have been illegally operating that dumpsite for three years," Palacio said in a press conference in Quezon City yesterday.

She said the Philippine Ecology System Corp., which operates the fishpond-turned-dump in Tanza, Navotas, did not have an environmental clearance certificate required for any waste disposal facility.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources has allowed Phileco to operate until June despite the company's violations, Palacio said.

Around 800 tons of garbage from Manila and Navotas are carried daily by the barge to the dumpsite, which sits beside numerous fish ponds.

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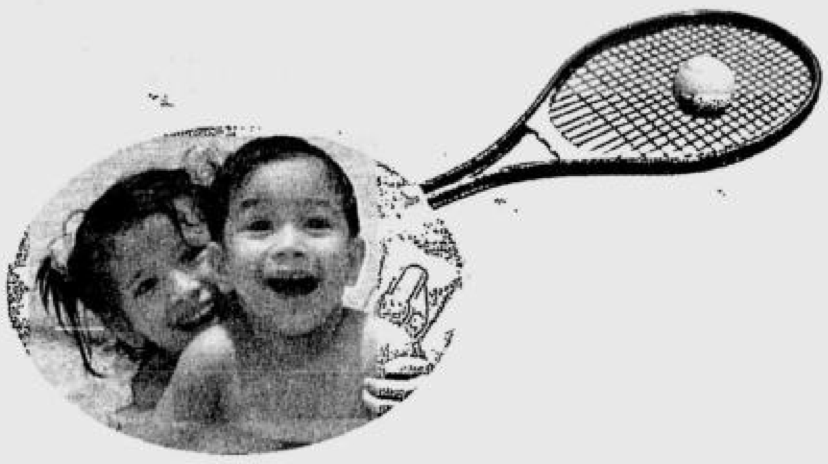

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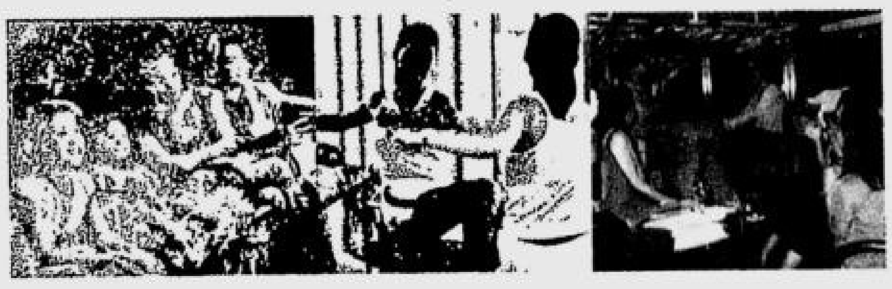

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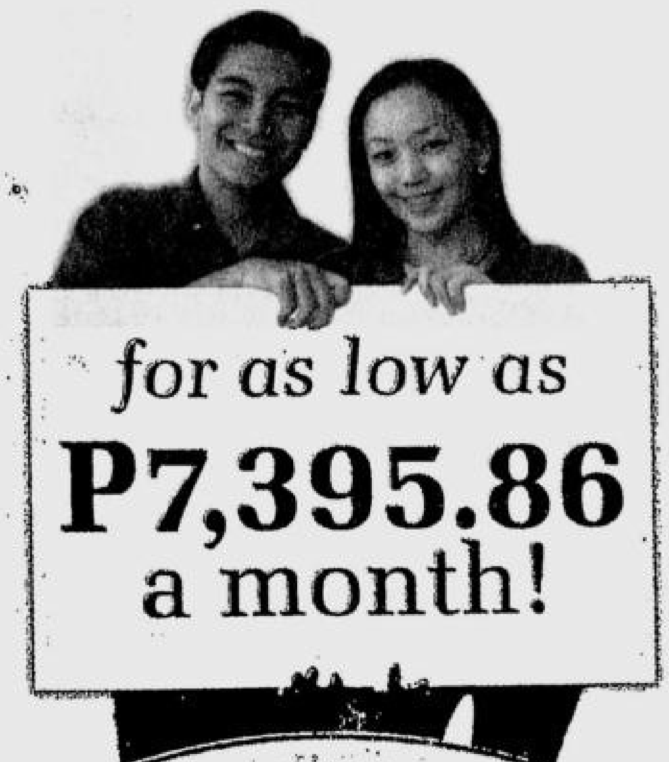

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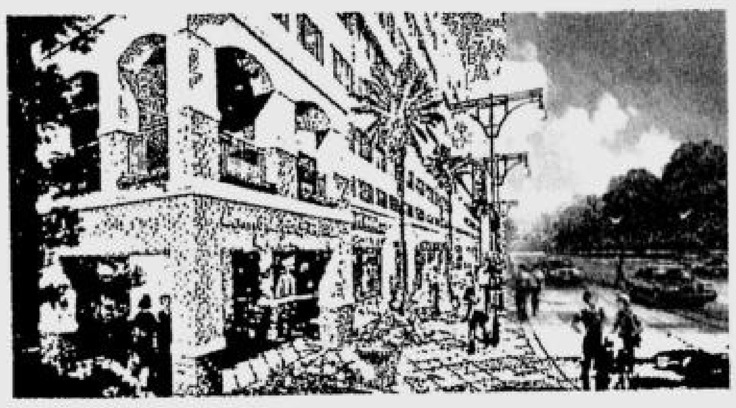

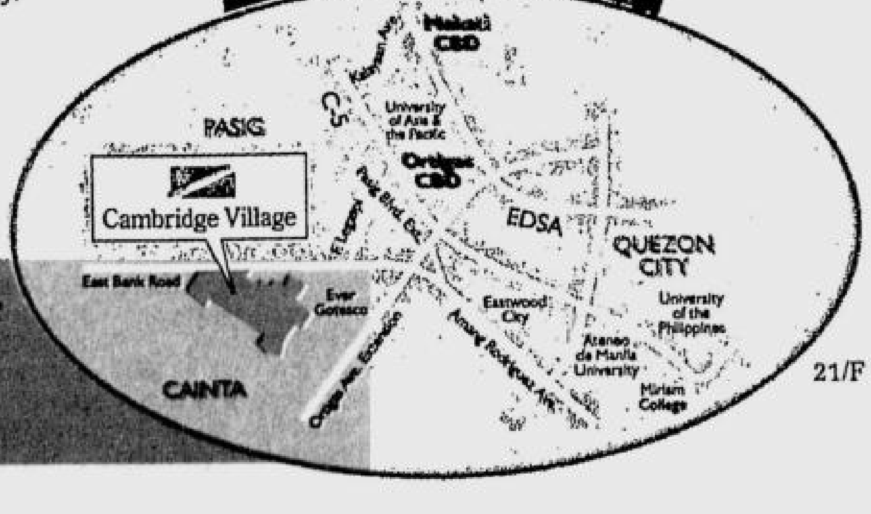
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FOR ANNOUNCEMENT PURPOSES ONLY

COJUANGCO: POC will honor covenant. EDWIN BACASMAS

BAP must respect deal on RP quintet–Peping

By Musong R. Castillo

THE POWERFUL basketball committee stands firmly behind the covenant forged among the sport's major stakeholders and will not be cowed by certain quarters into making any changes to it.

Philippine Olympic Committee president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco yesterday said through his spokesperson Joey Romasanta that the Basketball Association of the Philippines (BAP) is bound to support the resolution that was passed during the recent basketball summit.

"Unless we officially hear from the BAP, we will still honor what was agreed upon," said Romasanta, quoting Cojuangco.

During the summit, the BAP and the rest of the sport's stakeholders agreed to make Chot Reyes, the PBA-appointed national coach, as the country's basketball overlord for this year.

Reyes was also tasked to handle the Philippine team seeing action in the Southeast Asian Basketball Association tournament in Singapore next month.

Romasanta said the committee chaired by Cojuangco does not believe published statements attacking the agreement reflect the general sentiment of the BAP, which was well represented during the summit by executive vice president Christian Tan, lawyer Boni Alentajan and director Lito Alvarez.

Days after the panel reached an agreement, however, a BAP director warned Cojuangco not to tamper with the coaching staff of the Seaba-bound team.

Romasanta believes the statements were not made officially by the BAP.

"We will hold on to the agreement reached," said the former director of Project: Gintong Alay.

Meanwhile, the BAP board convenes in a make-or-break meeting today as it tries to find an acceptable solution to the crisis gripping the Seaba team.

"We will try to look for a happy ending for everybody," Filomeno "Boy" Codiñera Jr. told the INQUIRER over the phone. "Of course, what we want is for the MOA (with the PBA) and the (BAP) board resolution to be honored."

Codiñera, the former baseball icon and the BAP's VP for the Visayas, recently sounded out a warning "to anyone" not to touch the Seaba coaching staff.

"We want to have a say, especially with the coaching staff," he said.

Boysie Zamar was named coach of the quintet to the Seaba tournament in a unanimous resolution signed during the BAP's general assembly two months ago in Dumaguete City.

"We have to honor that," Codiñera said. "We cannot disregard a resolution because it is the voice of so many people."

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I can get the job done, says Zamar

By Francis Ochoa

ZAMAR

BOYSIE Zamar has been in the middle of a controversy that has stalled the country's preparations for a regional tournament.

It seemed just fair to ask him if he believes he can get the job done.

"I will tell you straight; I can do it," said Zamar.

The Basketball Association of the Philippines (BAP)-appointed coach, whose stint as chief tactician for the Southeast Asian Basketball Association (Seaba) remains hanging in a battle for appointment rights between the BAP and a powerful basketball committee, said he is simply waiting for the call to prove his worth.

"As a good soldier, I will follow what I am told," Zamar said. "We're here fighting for a noble cause.

"Right now, what we want to achieve is domination in the Southeast Asian level and hopefully, lift our game to the Asian level."

Zamar said he is saddened by what is starting to look like a tug-of-war for the coaching job, but admits that "there is really little security in our profession."

"I just want to thank the BAP officers for their faith in me," he added.

But while the former UE player and coach believes he can pull off a victory in the Seaba, which serves as a qualifier for the Asian Basketball Confederation championship, he refuses to say he is the best man for the job.

"Whether I say yes or no, there will always be detractors, so I'd rather not talk about it," he said.

Zamar has been part of the RP coaching staff to four Seaba meets and as many SEAG stagings. All of them ended up with gold medal. "If they give me the job, I'll just do it," he said.

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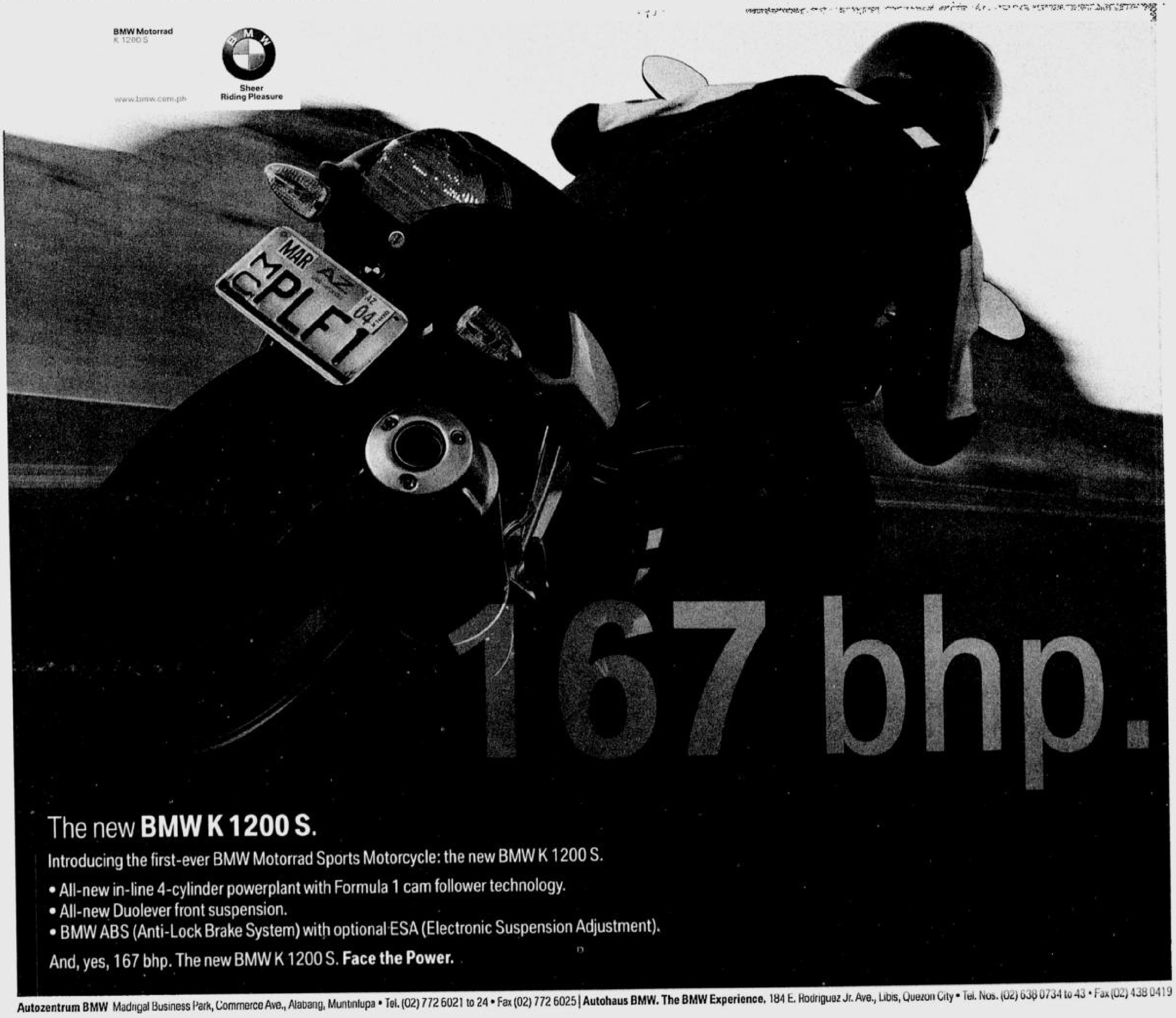

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RP strikes gold in Thailand

By Marc Anthony Reyes

DANILO Fresnido sent across a strong message to his Southeast Asian Games rivals and a lean Philippine team that left its aces at home also proved a point with solid performances in yesterday's Thailand Open.

Fresnido claimed the javelin gold and gave the Philippine delegation a measure of its build-up to the SEAG to be held here late this year, flinging the spear to 65.25 meters and reducing two athletes from regional powerhouse Thailand to runner-up finishes.

The performance of the team "goes to show that our preparation for the SEA Games [is] well under way and true to our battle plan, which is to win at least 15 gold medals," said athletics association president Go Teng Kok.

Mary Grace Melgar and Rene Herrera carved out runner-up finishes in the meet, but emerged the best Southeast Asian performers in their respective races.

Melgar breached her personal best, clocking 55.0 seconds in the 400m to finish 1.5 seconds behind a runner from Kazakhstan. A compatriot, Maricel Sibog, finished at 8th.

Herrera, on the other hand, finished behind Taiwanese Wen Chien Wu in the 1500m. The performance of Herrera, a former SEAG gold medalist, is important because he is the country's next best long-distance runner behind the pocket-sized Eduardo Buenavista, one of the stars who skipped the Thailand event.

National coach Jojo Posadas, who accompanied the Filipino athletes there, said the absence of the regular gold medal hopefuls of the track team made the result of the Thailand Open a great boost to the country's preparation for the SEA Games.

Meanwhile, the International Amateur Athletics Federation council has nominated Filipino coach Jesus Tubog Jr. as Area Technical Official.

TOUGH FIELD

Boracay dragons paddle off

MORE than 800 rowers, including those from eight international teams, plunge into action today in the 1st Boracay International Dragon Boat Races, billed as the 2005 Dragon Run.

Over 20 teams from Manila and Boracay will pit their skills and strength against squads from Hong Kong, Singapore and Australia in one of the biggest dragon boat racing festivals ever hosted by the Philippines.

PDBF technical director Nestor Ilagan believes Filipino rowers have a good chance of upstaging the foreigners.

The national men's team, which heads the local entries, won a gold medal in the 2003 Southeast Asian Games in Vietnam and the Asian Dragon Boat Championships in Shanghai last October.

The event is organized by Xtreme Concepts in cooperation with the Philippine Dragon Boat Federation and the Boracay Island Paddlers Association and sponsored by San Mig Light, Nivea Sun, Nestle Ice Cream, Pioneer Pearl Glaze, Salomon, SEAIR, Gatorade and Metro Active Magazine.

For inquiries, call Abby Antonio of Xtreme Concepts at 0917-8241020 or PDBF sec-gen Judith Hakim at 0918-9358549.

Coca-Cola feasts on Purefoods

Ruins Coleman debut

By June Navarro

AT 7-foot-1, Lorenzo Coleman could dunk the ball with a skip. Or, he could block shots in mid-air like a giant flyswatter.

But the Tennessee Tech alum hardly had the stamina to do either one and the Coca-Cola Tigers spoiled his debut with a 95-86 whacking of the Purefoods TJ Hotdogs last night in the Gran Matador PBA Fiesta Conference at the Araneta Coliseum.

Visibly listless throughout, Coleman scored 14 points on top of nine rebounds and five blocks in 29 minutes as he fell into foul trouble early on, and allowed the Tigers to jump the gun on the Hotdogs at the start of the second period.

"We used to have a seven-footer in the team so we came in prepared for Coleman," said Coca-Cola coach Eric Altamirano.

In the second game, Jimmy Alapag knocked in four triples in the fourth quarter to fuel a Talk 'N Text comeback from 22 points down in a 107-104 victory over Red Bull.

Jerald Honeycutt had 30 points and 17 rebounds as the Phone Pals, who trailed, 37-59 at one point, grabbed a share of the lead with an 8-4 record.

Poch Juinio, Ali Peek and Manny Ramos joined forces to contain the 300-pound Coleman as the Tigers went on to nail their fifth win in 12 games and tie the Hotdogs, Barako, Barangay Ginebra and Sta. Lucia Realty at the bottom of the standings.

The Tigers hardly missed Rafi Reavis, who came in street clothes after spraining his foot in a previous game. Altamirano said the 6-foot-8 Reavis will still be a doubtful starter opposite the Phone Pals tomorrow.

Mark Sanford had 21 points and seven rebounds while John Arigo scattered 20 points and eight boards, including a floater that gave the Tigers an 84-78 lead inside two minutes.

Noy Castillo buried back-to-back triples that sandwiched Sanford's long jumper to make it 88-84, but Johnny Abarrientos canned a three-pointer of his own to douse Purefoods' hopes.

Castillo sank six of his nine three-point attempts and finished with 18 points to pace the TJ Hotdogs.

"Right now, we are at the bottom. But our immediate goal is to at least finish fifth to eighth at the end of the classification round and avoid finishing ninth or 10th," said Altamirano.

The scores:

First Game

COCA-COLA 95—Sanford 21, Arigo 20, Peek 19, Singson 14, Wainwright 7, Abarrientos 6, Juinio 5, Antonio 3, Ramos 0.

PUREFOODS 86—Castillo 18, Limpot 15, Coleman 14, Yap 14, Raymundo 10, Evangelista 6, Simon 4, Artadi 3, Laure 2, Yee 0.

Quarters: 22-15, 43-33, 61-60, 95-86

Second Game

TALK 'N TEXT 107—Honeycutt 30, Miller 22, Alapag 19, Telan 16, Carey 9, Pablo 6, De Ocampo 3, Camaso 2, Ravena 0, Belano 0.

RED BULL 104—Tugade 20, Johnson 18, Villanueva 18, Bagulo 17, Asaytono 16, Meneses 7, Ybañez 4, Valenzuela 4, Robinson 0, Ejercito 0.

Quarters: 26-30, 43-59, 72-85, 107-74

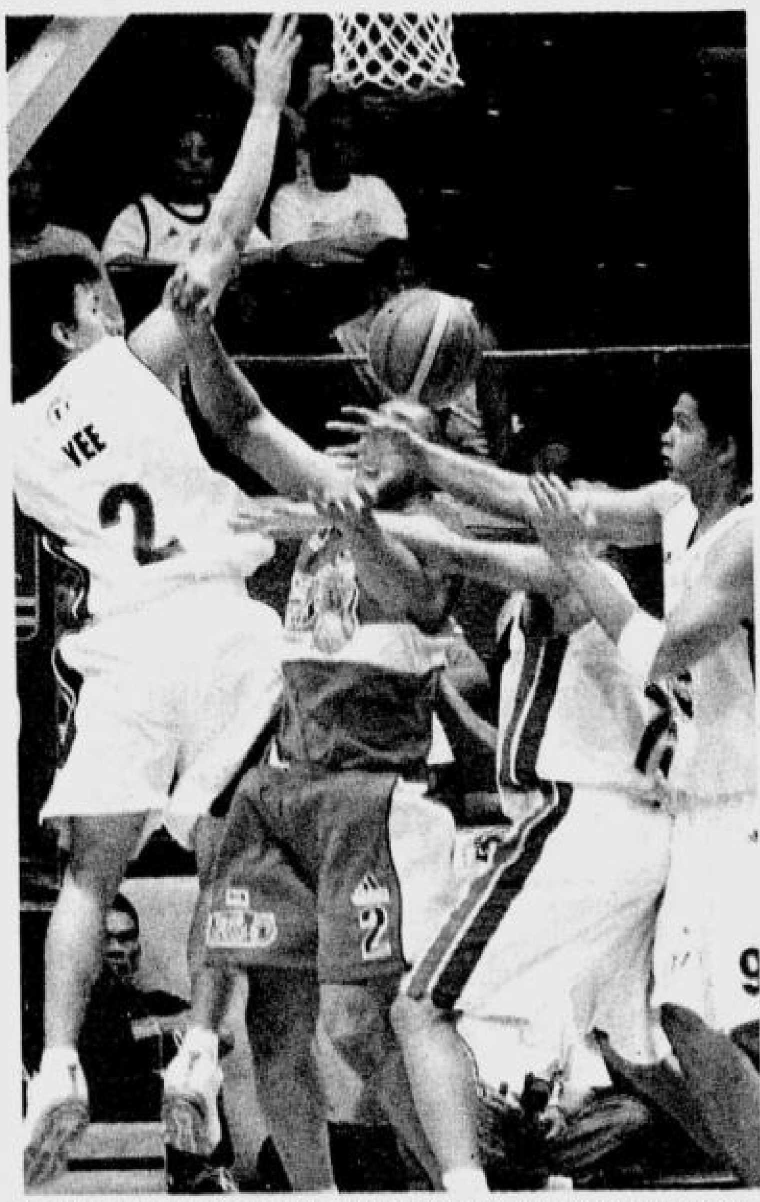


PHOTO AUGUST DELA CRUZ

COKE'S Ali Peek (second from left) is swarmed by Richard Yee, Rey Evangelista and Jun Limpot of Purefoods in their game yesterday.

Alarmed

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

IF it's true, as the papers say, that Boy Codiñera is alarmed over the recent developments in basketball, I say he is justified.

Said Boy as quoted by the papers: "Hey, we are still in control here. The BAP is the national sports association that is duly recognized by the Fiba (World Basketball Federation). Nobody is allowed, will be allowed, to intervene in our affairs."

Or words to that effect.

Boy, a drinking buddy of mine for years—and counting—is now BAP vice president for the Visayas. He is a one-of-a-kind in sports. He is a legend in baseball, but his three sons went to basketball and all made a name in basketball, particularly the still-active Jerry Codiñera of FedEx. Of all our living legends in sports, Boy is the most durable, if not enduring. He can still out-drink anyone, young and old, from Philippine sportslandia.

Boy's pronouncements could be an oblique way of telling Peping Cojuangco, "Leave us alone, Sir. We at BAP are autonomous."

As everybody knows, Peping, the president of the Philippine Olympic Committee, has formed a basketball committee a while back to oversee preparations for our campaigns in the Seaba and SEA Games this year.

Not a bad move, since it was done in the interest of flag and country.

If Boy sees that as intervention into the affairs of the BAP, with all due respect, I disagree.

Hey, wasn't the BAP fully represented in that meeting?

And, yes, Peping came into the picture after the BAP and PBA had signed a memorandum of agreement for both groups to finally work toward attaining lost glory in basketball overseas. Times have drastically changed in that a team today playing abroad without PBA players in its fold is like sailing into the Pacific Ocean aboard a *banca*. Peping's entry merely cemented that pact. Who could be the best person to stamp its approval to the agreement if not Peping, the country's Olympic boss?

I say Boy is justified in expressing his alarm but the truth of the matter is, Boy could be into a false-alarm mode.

He should be alarmed if Peping is making orders left and right, dictating things on the BAP left and right, or saying, "Hey, I'm now the basketball king, the BAP boss if you will, from hereon."

No, I believe Peping was merely trying to suggest to do this or that and, while at it, was observing democracy to the hilt. Otherwise, he would not have gathered all the basketball-loving sectors in our midst to assess the basketball situation and its future. In so doing, he solicited their insight on the matter. It was more an act in the name of national patrimony than anything. Personal gain? C'mon, Boy, wake up. Peping has become more than a made man.

Listen to me, Boy. If Peping had taken over the reins in the BAP as suggested by your tantrums, I'd be your first ally in mounting a coalition to kick Peping out of the BAP, if not the POC.

And, take this, too, Boy: Of course, the final say on all matters affecting basketball in the country in connection with Fiba-related tournaments is the BAP. The things Peping and his committee have done thus far, and will do, are but recommendatory. You and your BAP buddies are, and will always be, the boss till a new set of officers comes along.

Is that clear, Boy?

If not, then I'll be alarmed.

* * *

FASTBREAK. Nonong and Astrid Fernandez of Glan, Austria, will head for home today, weeks after savoring once again the beauty of the Philippines. They've been to so many places, but one weekend vacation that they said they'd cherish the most was at the Taal Vista Hotel in Tagaytay City. Mary Ann J. Entienza made that trip possible but, of course, with big help from COO Alfredo Roca of Fuego Hotels Properties Management Corp., which specializes in hotel and resort operations. Aside from Taal Vista, also under Alfredo Roca's wings are Club Punta Fuego, Pearl Farm Beach Resort and Terrazas de Punta Fuego. Thank you also to Vicky Mejarito (cost controller), Danny Herrera (F & B manager), lawyer Merilyn Doza (financial controller) and Judy Ochoa-Laurel (rooms division manager), who all made the stay of Nonong and Astrid and their entourage—among them Dante & Ching, Maricel & Luigi, Bing & Marco—at Taal Vista Hotel extremely memorable. Cheers!

Lipa hosts adidas Streetball elims today

FORTY teams vie for top honors in the seniors and girls divisions of the adidas Streetball Challenge which stages its third pocket tournament today at La Salle-Lipa in Lipa City.

The one-day event also serves as the fourth leg of the 11-stage circuit after the inaugural Big Leg tournament which kicked off the annual event last month.

Team Beta of San Beda, Team Galaxy of UP Diliman, and La Salle-Greenhills A's Team Hardcore and Team Quarter Pounder advanced to the National Finals after ruling the seniors, girls, juniors and midgets divisions, respectively.

Winners of the first three pocket tournaments, which all gained berths in the finals slated July 30-31 at the Festival Mall in Alabang, Muntinlupa City, included Team Allude of Ateneo-A and Team Arvinda of Barangay Tinago-A (Naga) and the Holy Angel U's Team Barracks and Team Allude.

Action in the half-court game in Lipa is expected to be fierce with the winners also gaining a crack at the Asian Streetball Finals which the country is hosting in September.

For inquiries, call coordinator RJ del Rosario at 0917-9053794.

Co-presented by Globe Gentxt, the event is backed by McDonald's, Cherifer Multivitamins, Snickers chocolate bar, Coppertone, adidas body care, Blue Angel alcohol, Milo, Powerade, Viva Mineral Water, adidas eyewear and Yehey.com.

SPORTSWATCH

Valenzuela Red clobbers Blue

VALENZUELA Red clobbered Valenzuela Blue, 103-82, last weekend to remain in group second in the First Global Destiny Basketball League eliminations at the Doña Ata covered court in Marulas, Valenuzela City. The Valenzuela Red cagers improved to 8-1 to stay within striking distance of pacesetting Valenzuela Light Blue (10-0), which won over Valenzuela Green by forfeit, in the event supported by Solid Video Corp., Sony Philippines and MyDestiny Cable Internet. Quezon City Red also remained in second spot in its group with a 4-1 record after dumping Quezon City Brown, 117-69, in the grassroots program of the cable TV giant also backed by Avid Sales Cor., Regent Food and Molten balls. Over at the San Dionisio gym, Parañaque Red whipped Parañaque Light Blue, 94-82, to move into a tie with its rival at second with similar 3-2 record, a half-game behind Parañaque Violet (4-1). Tournament commissioner Jet Gaerlan, who is also the cable giant's vice president for promotions and special events, said the matches are aired over Global Kabayan Channel 3 from noon to 2 p.m. daily, with replays from 6 to 8 p.m.

Kravmaga technique at Atrium

THE WORLD'S highest ranking kravmaga expert will discuss the basic principles and technique of the martial art today, 12-2 p.m. at the Atrium, SM Megamall A and at the Rockwell Station, Makati, 5 p.m. Kravmaga is a contact combat fighting technique that started in 1940 and was popularized by the Israeli Defense Forces during the Sinai campaign. It was founded by Imil Lichtenfeld who tutored the visiting kravmaga expert, Eyah Yanilov. Under the helm of Yanilov as head instructor of international kravmaga, the fighting technique is now being used by defense and police forces all over the world, notably the European countries, part of Asia, and the San Francisco police force. Kravmaga was demonstrated before the officers and members of the Philippine National Police and the Armed Forces of the Philippines last year. There will also be a seminar on Saturday May 7, between 2 to 5 p.m. at the kravmaga Philippines training center at 20 E Maclang cor. P. Guevara, San Juan.

Pinoy 3rd in Seoul Wheelathon

BUCKING unfamiliar terrain, low-tech racing wheelchairs and 40 world-class racers from 14 nations, polio stricken Jonas Matados did the country proud with a third place finish in the 21.0975 km Half Course of the 14th Seoul International Wheelathon Marathon held recently. The 24-year-old Matados, a wheelchair repairer of the Tahanang Walang Hagdanan, clocked 52 minutes 42.6 seconds to garner a glass trophy and $5000 cash prize, presented by Seoul City Mayor Myung-Bak Lee during the Awarding Ceremonies held at the Jamsil Olympic Main Stadium. Teammate and Oita (Japan) Marathon 2000 finisher Deodato Alferez, watch repairman from Marikina, suffered wheelchair malfunction midway and finished 18th place with a time of 1 hour 3 minutes and 41.8 seconds. Matados, bronze medalist in the 10,000 meter wheelchair race of the 2nd Asean Paragames in Hanoi, and Alferez trained with recent Manila visitor and 5 time World Paralympic Gold Medalist Errol Marklein of Sunrise Medical Bothare members of Team Philippines training for the 3rd Asiean Paragames to be held Dec. 12-21, 2005 in Manila.

Vigan hosts Junior Tennis Cup

NORTH Luzon age groupers take center stage when the Vigan Tennis Club hosts the 2005 Milo Junior Tennis Cup & regional workshop on May 6-8. Featured events are the boys' and girls' 18-under, 16-under, 14-under, 12-under and the unisex 10-under divisions in the Milo netfest organized by the Children's Tennis Workshop and supported by adidas with Philta sanction. The event is being coordinated with the office of Vigan Mayor Ferdie Medina and club president Bong Donato.

Ilocos Norte tops IRAA for 6th time

ILOCOS Norte overwhelmed the opposition in the recent Ilocos Region Athletic Association meet (IRAA) held at Laoag City, winning the overall crown for the sixth time. So overpowering was Ilocos Norte that its record gold medal haul of 148 exceeded the 127 golds won by other participants combined. Second placer Pangasinan garnered only 37 golds. Except for athletics (boys), badminton (boys), swimming (boys), chess, table tennis (girls), and volleyball in the elementary division, and athletics (boys), badminton (girls), basketball (boys), boxing, chess (boys and girls) and volleyball (boys and girls) in the secondary division, Ilocos Norte captured the championship for all other events. The annual meet was nearly shelved were it not for the intercession of the Ilocos Norte Province Board through board member and provincial sports consultant Michael M. Keon, who filed a resolution appealing to DECS Secretary Florencio Abad and Region I head Dr. Vilma Labrador, not to scrap the provincial meet and offered Ilocos Norte to host this year's edition.

Monsay High Cup golf tourney

THE RAMON Magsaysay High School-España, Manila Batch '83 will hold the 1st Monsay High Cup golf tournament on May 27 at Club Intramuros, a fund-raising event to help in the computer education program of RMHS. Sponsored by Philippine Games and Amusement Corp., Network Solutions, Philippine Airlines, Interfaces Corp., Haze Phils., Eastern Telecoms and South Point Driving Range, the tournament is open to all graduates of RMHS. Tee-off time is between 1-3 p.m. Tickets are pegged at P1,500 with buffet dinner and raffle prizes. Grand prize is a trip for two to Boracay's Pearl of the Pacific (three days, two nights). For details, contact Imee Reyes 0917-8494313, Reuel Obar 0917-8572253 or Jean Malanum of the Manila Bulletin.

NCA derby finals: 62 fights today

THE BATTLE of imported gamefowls continue today as the premiere National Cockers Association (NCA) presents the championship round of it's big time 7-cock derby beginning at 4 p.m. at the 17,000-seat Araneta Coliseum. Thirty-one entries qualified for today's 4-cock finals featuring 62 fights. Today's hosts are Roger Buenaflor, Efren Canlas, Tony Marfori and Pepito Ngo. Early favorites are Complexor 3000 Firefly 14 of sabong idol Patrick Antonio, Joke Joke Joke of Gerry Ramos, Thunderbird Firefly I of Big Dome owner Jorge "Nene" Araneta, Mt. Panamao of Rep. Gerry "Boy" Espina, Wild Wing Sundance of Rep. Ronnie Puno and Boy Jiao, WTJ Makati Coliseum of Lito Orillaza and Mulawin VGB of Frank Berin. Last week, two entries shared the NCA 7-cock derby championship: PEBR Complexor 3000 Mulawin I of Pol Estrellado and Paniqui Tarlac Jimafer of Bebot Roxas and Ramon Mancenares. Meanwhile, a big field of participants is expected next week (May 10 and 12) as NCA presents another 7-cocker to be hosted by Ruel Ricafort, Gov. JV Magsaysay and Boy Marzo. For inquiries, contact 9112928 and 9113101.

Pasa bares lean and mean candidates' pool for SEA Games

THE PHILIPPINE Amateur Swimming Association (Pasa) yesterday bared the roster of tankers from which the country's representatives to the Southeast Asian Games will be picked.

Vietnam SEAG gold winners Miguel Molina and Miguel Mendoza and champion team members Carlo Piccio, Raphael Chua, Gerard Bordado and Mark Kalaw head the talents counted upon to win at least three gold medals in the biennial Games.

Pasa president Mark Joseph said the country can come up with at least seven aquatics golds in the SEAG, although only three of them will probably come from swimming. Three more golds are expected in diving and one more in water polo.

Joseph said the lineup will be completed by the end of August when the national open is held right at the SEAG venue, Trace Computer College Aquatics Center.

Completing the national team A are Ronald Guiriba, Olympian JB Walsh, Ernest Dee, Evan Grabador, Benjamin Uy and Michaelmars Danila. Team B members are Ryan Arabejo, Ferdinand Frigillana, Kendrick Uy, Jan Michael Chiu and Louie Marquez, while Roman Borja, Byron Sy, Mark Tano and Raem Puno made it to the Team C and developmental pool.

Olympian and national record holder Jacklyn Pangilinan leads women's Team A along with Marichi Gandionco, Liza Danila, Chrizel Lagunday, Luica Dacanay, Jenny Guerrero and Heidi Ong. Liane Marquez. Denjylie Cordero, Bianca Uy and Isabela Arabejo compose Team B.

Team C team members are Josephine Pilapil, Nicole Santiago, Krestia Lacson and Monique Bacolod. *Marc Anthony Reyes*

WBC king Barrera keen on Suico tiff

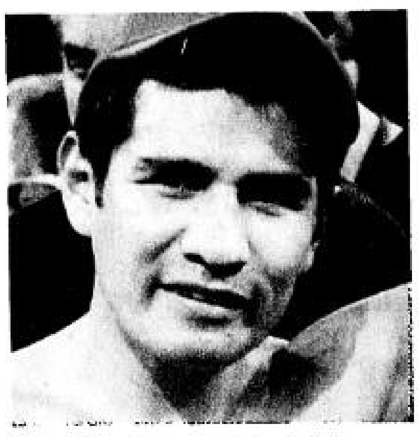
By Salven L. Lagumbay, *Contributor*

WORLD Boxing Council super-featherweight king Marco Antonio Barrera has declared his readiness to face Filipino Randy "Komong Bato" Suico if his promoter, Oscar De La Hoya, agrees to the matchup.

Barrera, in an interview with the Mexican media Tuesday, said De La Hoya chooses his opponents.

"If a fight with Suico is interesting, if it is accepted by many then we can do it," said Barrera from his Mexico City base. "I have seen videos of Suico's fights. He is a seasoned boxer who hits hard."

Suico, who is ranked WBC no. 3 behind Erik Morales and Manny Pacquiao, successfully defended his OPBF title on April 27, knocking out Thai Muangfahlek Kiatwichean in the fourth of a scheduled 12-rounder.



BARRERA has seen Suico's fights.

Among Suico's fans at ringside was Ring Magazine featherweight king Pacquiao, who beat Barrera by technical knockout in November 2003 in Texas.

Following his win, Suico declared: "I want Barrera next with his WBC title at stake. I am ready to face him."

Sultan challenges Japanese champ

PHILIPPINE welterweight champ Dondon Sultan says he is fit and ready for his July 21 challenge against Oriental and Pacific Boxing Federation king Kazuhiko Hidaka at the Korakuen Hall in Tokyo, Japan.

Sultan, who has been undefeated since taking the crown in 2002, has been sparring at the ALA Gym against OPBF super-featherweight king Randy Suico, WBF junior welter world champ Dindo Castañares, and RP junior welter boss Bart Abapo.

"He seems very confident going into this very important fight," said sportsman Tony Aldeguer, who owns the ALA Gym where Sultan has been holding camp since joining SGG Stable of Sammy Gello-ani. *Salven L. Lagumbay*

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AF3 bets eye revenge in Zhuhai

THE INDONESIAN speed devils are not invincible. That's the standard answer you'd get from the rest of the drivers whom the Indonesians put in the shade the last time out at the Batangas Racing Circuit in Rosario town.

Revenge will be the name of the game when rounds three and four of the Asian Formula 3 Series are held this weekend in Zhuhai, China.

Fresh off their victory double at the BRC last month, Indonesian half-brothers Ananda Mikola and Moreno Soeprapto set out as the heavy favorites at the 4.3-km Zhuhai International Circuit in Guangdong province.

Mikola, driving for Fastron Racing with Threebond, leads the Overall Class with 40 points, earning 20 apiece in ruling rounds one and two. He totes a 10-point edge over defending champion Christian Jones of Australia, lead driver of Christian Jones Motosport.

Rounding off the top three is Irishman John O'Hara, driving for Fujitsu-Ten Toyota Team Tom's, who has 22 points.

Unfamiliar territory

"He (Mikola) really drove well in Batangas, but we'll see what happens in Zhuhai," said Jones, 24, who's in unfamiliar territory, having led all the way in claiming last year's crown.

Soeprapto, lead driver of Denso Hanjin F3, has also amassed 40 points in the Promotions Class, with Filipino Enzo Pastor running second with 30 and Irishman Greg Murphy, driving for Ambi Pur Team Goddard-Minardi Team Asia, third with 22.

Pastor, who drove for Shell Helix Kinetic PCSO in Batangas, has joined the Overall Class where he will drive a Dallara 301 Renault-powered car purchased recently by Team T.E.C. which is being managed by his father, Tom.

"It will be hard developing a new car in such a short space of time but I will give it a go and hope to score some points," said Enzo, who knows the Zhuhai track, having raced there before in the AF3 and Asian Formula Renault circuits.

Pastor joins young guns Dado Peña and Tyson Sy, along with veteran Pepon Marave, in carrying the Philippine flag in Zhuhai. Peña, driving for Team Goddard, is the best-placed Filipino driver in the Overall Class, running sixth with 10 points despite a crash in the first lap of the second leg.

Marave, back in the driver's seat for Shell Kinetic after sitting out last year's series, is currently seventh with 10 points while Sy, lead driver of Speedtech Asia, only has two points to show so far and is in 11th place.

Newest addition

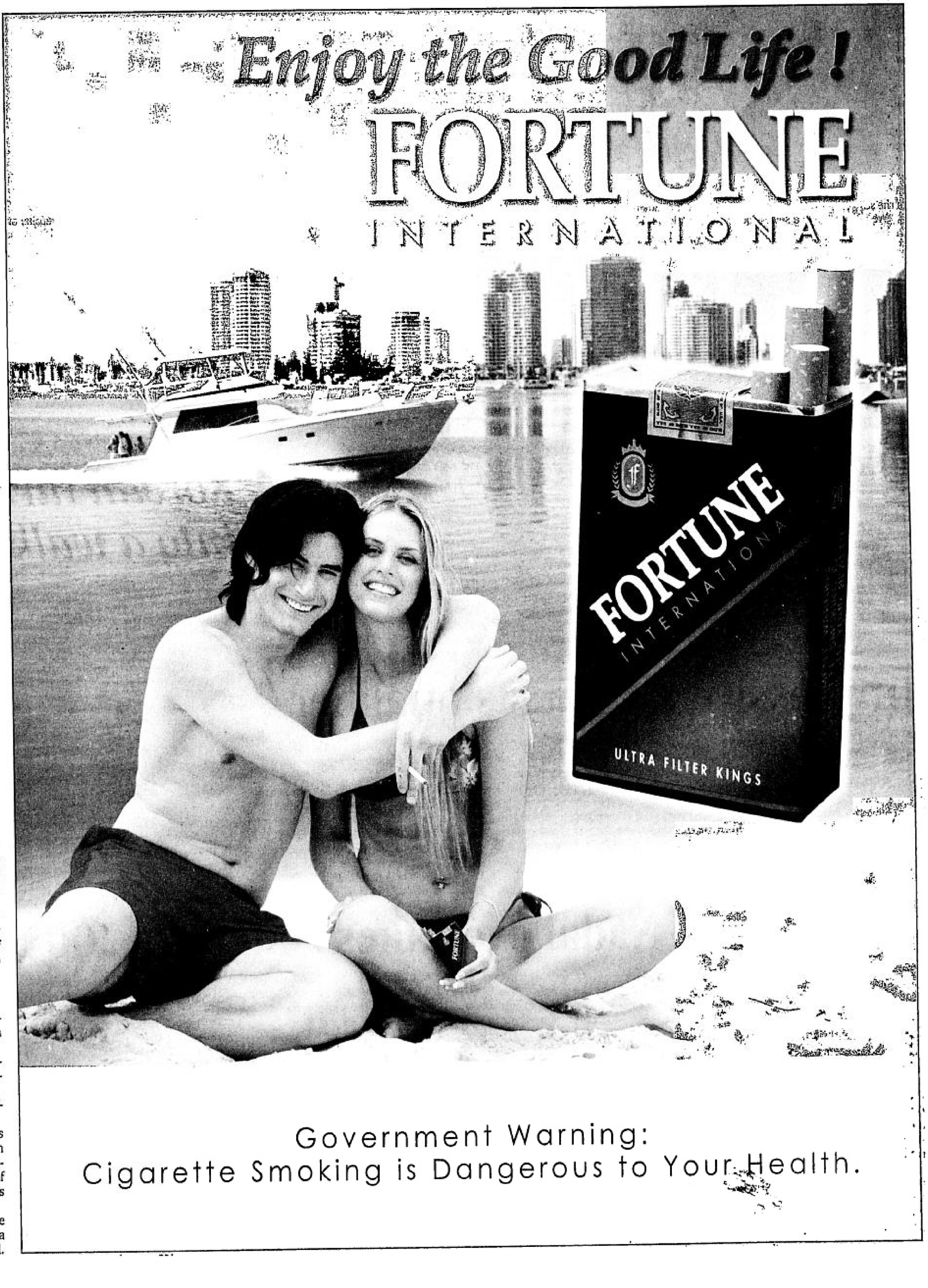
Irish driver Lee Farrel will be the newest addition to the field. He will drive Kinetic's Dallara 398 Tom's Toyota promotions class car.

Farrel, 20, raced for O'Hara's LOH Formula Ireland Team last year and comes highly-rated. Farrel will drive the car raced by Pastor in Batangas.

Also joining the Zhuhai legs is Hong Kong's Jeffrey Lee, 30, who will drive for Speed Tech Asia.

Also in the 17-man field are Briton James Winslow of Shell Kinetic, JP Carino of Speedtech Asia, JP Tuason of Tuason Racing School and Renan Morales of Fujitsu and Rodolfo Avila of Macau. Filipino John Marcelo, who crashed his car in round two in Batangas, is out of action.

Ed Peña, chair of the AF3 Corp., said the Zhuhai Circuit, which was intended for Formula One racing, will pose a big challenge for the field.



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Streaking Sorenstam looks unstoppable

SORENSTAM

JACKSONVILLE, Florida—Annika Sorenstam was in South Korea six months ago when something strange happened.

She didn't win.

That seems hard to fathom these days because the 34-year-old Swede hasn't lost since. The following week in Japan, she won the Mizuno Classic by nine shots to start a streak that has reached five consecutive victories, matching the US LPGA Tour record set by Nancy Lopez in 1978.

The biggest difference is that Sorenstam has built her streak over six months; Lopez did it in six weeks.

Sorenstam hasn't even played in five weeks, taking the longest break of her season after winning her eighth career major at the Kraft Nabisco Championship. Next up is the Michelob Ultra Open at Kingsmill this week, and a chance to make history with her sixth win in a row.

"One in a row is a good run," deadpanned 22-year tour regular Juli Inkster. "I can't imagine five in a row."

Even more difficult is imagining anyone capable of beating her.

Sorenstam's run is similar to what Tiger Woods did at the end of the 1999 season and the start of 2000, when he won six straight US PGA Tour events and made everyone wonder—ever so briefly—whether Byron Nelson's record of 11 straight wins in 1945 really was out of reach.

It was for Woods.

Sorenstam simply looks unstoppable.

"She doesn't do anything bad," Inkster said. "It's not like she's overpowering. If she gets in trouble, she doesn't knock it around or over the trees. She gets it back in the fairway and gets on the green. She knows she's going to make five or six birdies. And if she shoots 1 or 2 under, she knows she's going to have that round at 5 or 6 under. She knows what she wants to do on the golf course."

That alone might explain why Sorenstam has never appeared so calm and confident.

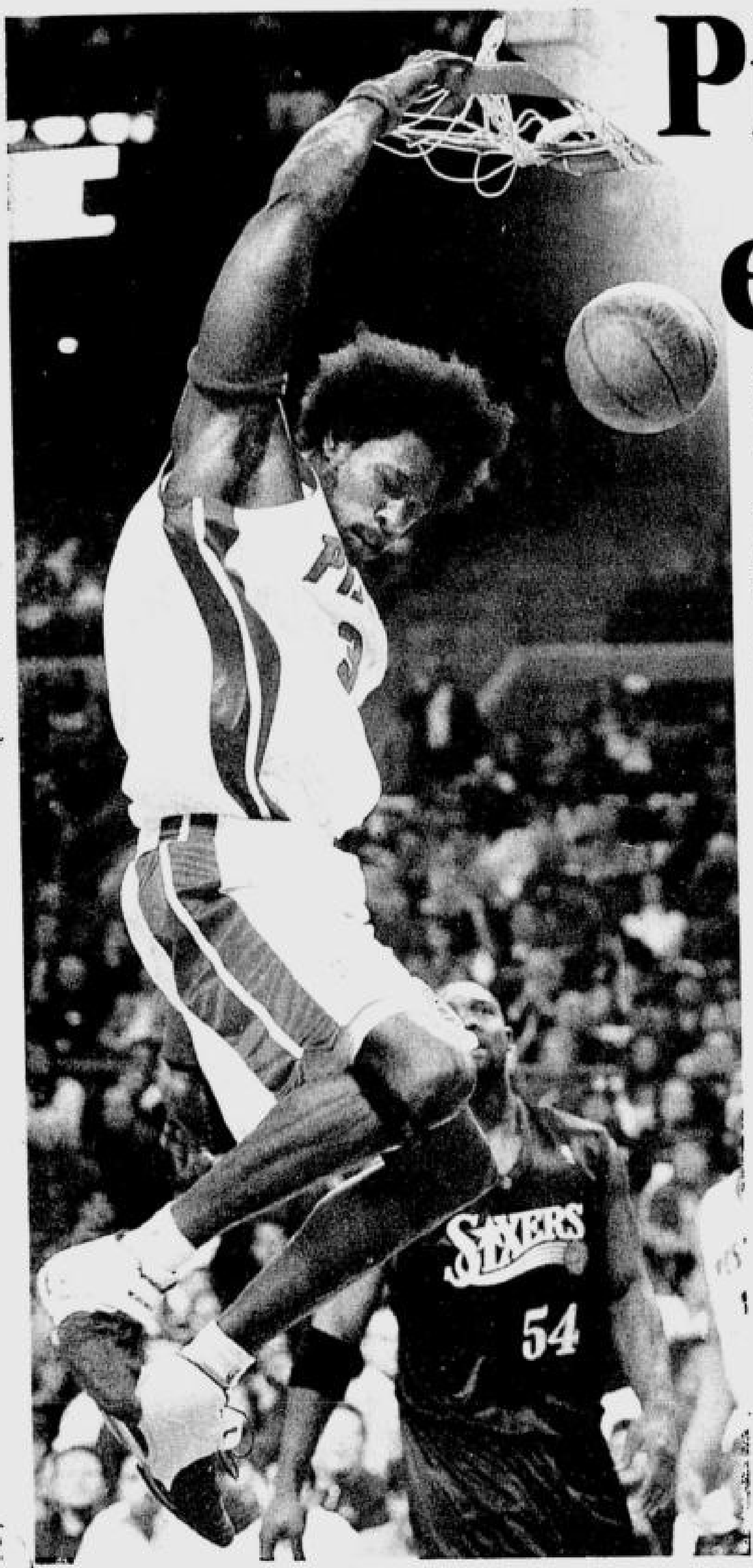
She has become the most dominant player in golf, with 28 victories and five majors in her last 61 starts. Woods won 19 times in 38 starts on the PGA Tour from 1999 to 2001, five of those majors. He separated himself so much from his peers that it raised two questions that now must be asked of Sorenstam.

Is she that good?

Or is the competition that bad?

"It's a bit of both, much like it was with him," said Judy Rankin, an LPGA Hall of Famer who now works as a TV analyst. "I thought at one time when he was so good, these players were going to have to tag-team him; if one wasn't there every week, the other had to be. And I think that's true in women's golf.

"She is good to the point that four or five of the next best players have to tag-team here and not make it easy for her, not make it where she wins by eight." AP


EARLIER named the league's defensive player of the year, Detroit center Ben Wallace shows off his offensive prowess with a slam dunk.

Pistons, Sonics eliminate foes

SEATTLE, Washington—Defending champion Detroit and flashy Seattle advanced to the second round of the National Basketball Association playoffs with triumphs Tuesday that ousted Philadelphia and Sacramento.

Chauncey Billups and Richard Hamilton each scored 23 points for Detroit in an 88-78 victory over Philadelphia. The Pistons won the series 4-1 and will meet either Indiana or Boston for a berth in the Eastern Conference finals.

"I needed to get it going but I wanted to stay inside the offense," Hamilton said. "I didn't want to get greedy. I just wanted to look for my shot and take my opportunities."

Jermaine O'Neal scored 19 points and grabbed 10 rebounds Tuesday to spark Indiana past Boston, 90-85, giving the Pacers a 3-2 edge in their best-of-seven series with game six Thursday in Indianapolis.

"We have to come out with a sense of urgency," Indiana's Stephen Jackson said. "We have to have an attitude and close this thing out."

Seattle's Ray Allen scored 30 points, including a decisive layup with 12 seconds remaining, and the SuperSonics beat Sacramento 122-118 to close out their series in five games.

The Sonics reached the second round for the first time in seven years and will face San Antonio or Denver next.

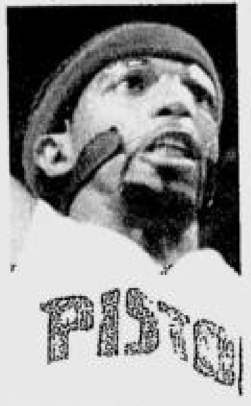
"We've come a long way. We definitely have," Allen said. "We believed every single moment of the way that we were a good team and we could win the series."

Peja Stojakovic scored 38 points and Mike Bibby added 35 in a losing cause for the Kings, defeated in the opening round for the first time since 2000.

"It happens. Somebody has to lose. I'm not happy it's us. But we gave our all. We went out and left it all on the court," Bibby said.

Stojakovic sank a 3-point shot to lift the Kings within 120-118 with 38 seconds remaining but Allen drove to the basket for a crucial layup that put the game out of reach.

"He waited, held the ball, went on his own and made the play," Sonics coach Nate McMillan said. "He has played great in this series. Some of the shots he has made in the past two games have been unbelievable."


HAMILTON REUTERS

The Pistons advanced despite 34 points by 76ers star Allen Iverson, who limped off the court 30 seconds into the fourth quarter after twisting his right ankle when his foot landed on the foot of Detroit's Lindsey Hunter.

"I felt it touch the floor and knew I did something to it. But when I sat on the bench, it calmed down a little bit and I was able to get back in the game," Iverson said.

Philadelphia might have forced a sixth game but no one stepped up to help Iverson with the scoring load against the defense-minded Pistons, coached by Larry Brown, who guided Iverson on the 76ers and 2004 US Olympic teams.

"I feel like doing it again," Iverson said. "I feel like going through it all over again. I feel bad right now because we just lost but I saw a lot of positive things this year. I'm looking forward to next year and learning from what went on in this series."

The Pistons made eight of their first 12 shots in the fourth quarter and pounded Iverson to make certain he could not ignite a rally.

"When you play a team like that, the way they put me through hell, you can't have nothing but respect for them," Iverson said. "That will be the team I'll be cheering on for the rest of the playoffs. They don't care who gets the glory. All they care about is winning. That's why they are NBA champions."

Ben Wallace grabbed 13 rebounds and added 11 points for the Pistons. AFP

Bulls tyro Gordon bags Sixth Man award

NEW YORK—Chicago guard Ben Gordon became the first rookie in National Basketball Association history to win the Sixth Man of the Year Award, the league announced here Tuesday.

Gordon received 88 of 125 first-place votes for 513 points from a media panel. Boston guard Ricky Davis was second with 17 first-place votes and 257 points. Denver guard Earl Boykins was third at 11 first-place votes and 155 points.

"We would not have won 47 games without the things Ben did for us in the fourth quarter," Bulls general manager John Paxson said. "People recognized that around the league and that's why he basically ran away with it."

Selected third in last year's NBA Draft, Gordon played in all 82 games for the Bulls, coming off the bench 79 times and averaging 15.1 points on 41 percent shooting. He also averaged 2.6 rebounds and 2.0 assists.

No one approached Gordon's fourth-quarter heroics. He scored 10 or more points in the fourth quarter 21 times, including a 22-point outburst in a 102-99 win at Charlotte on March 30.

Instead of being upset at a reserve role, Gordon turned coach Scott Skiles' decision into a positive.

"The way coach Skiles prepared me this year helped me a lot," Gordon said. "It made me earn everything I've gotten. Not starting humbled me, but I found my niche off the bench."

Only Cleveland's LeBron James and Kobe Bryant of the Los Angeles Lakers hit double figures in the final quarter more often this season and both of them were starters.

Gordon also helped the Bulls make the playoffs for the first time since 1998. Gordon scored 30 points in his playoff debut and Chicago's first-round series with Washington is level at 2-2 with game five Wednesday. AFP

Okafor top rookie, says source

CHARLOTTE, North Carolina—Charlotte forward Emeka Okafor won the NBA's Rookie of the Year award, narrowly beating best friend Ben Gordon of the Chicago Bulls, a Bobcats source told The Associated Press on Tuesday.

The award will be announced on Wednesday. The Bobcats have called a news conference for what they have only called "a major announcement."

Okafor, the No. 2 overall pick in the NBA draft, led all rookies in scoring (15.9 points per game) and rebounding (10.9 rpg) and was second in his class behind Atlanta's Josh Smith in blocks (1.71).

He also ranked second in the NBA with 3.8 offensive rebounds per game. He had 47 games with double figures in both points and rebounds.

But Okafor spent the final months in a close battle with Gordon, his best friend and roommate while the two led University of Connecticut to the US college championship last year.

Okafor played under tremendous pressure the entire season as the face of the expansion Bobcats. Charlotte traded up in the draft to pick him and make him the cornerstone of their franchise. AP

Impressive Kim ousts qualifier

BERLIN—Kim Clijsters has been impressive since returning from a 10-month injury layoff.

The former top-ranked Belgian, who has won 18 of her last 19 matches, routed qualifier Yuliana Fedak, 6-1, 6-0, in just 44 minutes Tuesday at the German Open to reach the second round of the $1.3 million event.

"Today I felt good. I have been doing a lot of running and bike riding and it paid off," Clijsters said, referring to her fitness program while out with a left wrist injury. "To me, it doesn't matter how quickly a match ends—it's how I feel on court."

With the French Open starting in three weeks, the German Open is a major tuneup on clay and boasts a strong field led by defending champion Amelie Mauresmo and Maria Sharapova.

Justine Henin-Hardenne was also scheduled to play Tuesday, but showers led to the rescheduling of her match until Wednesday.

Before the rain, sixth-seeded Nadia Petrova of Russia beat the Czech Republic's Klara Koukalova, 7-5, 6-4, and Dally Randriantefy of Madagascar upset ninth-seeded Nathalie Dechy of France, 7-5, 6-1. Argentina's Gisela Dulko also rolled past 15th-seeded Daniela Hantuchova of Slovakia, 6-4, 6-4. AP

Korean turns climbing into a walk in the park

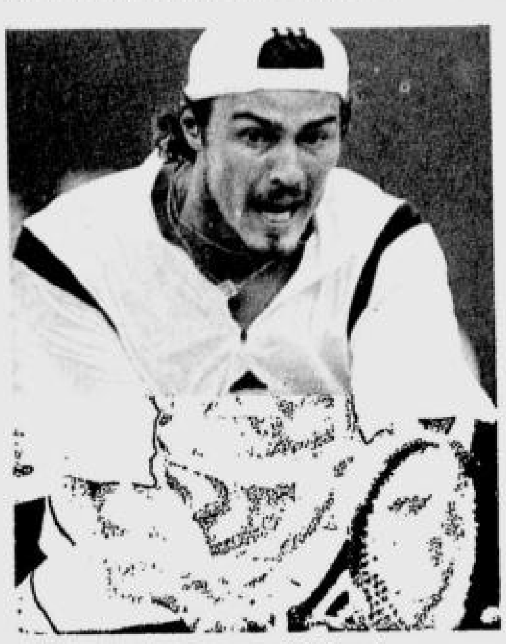
KOREAN adventurist Park Young Seok accomplished a rare climbing feat after reaching the North Pole recently.

Park, a member of Korea's The North Face climbing team, became the first person in the world to ascend the 14 highest Himalayan Peaks shooting up 8,000 meters above sea level; the so-called seven summits, the highest peaks on each of the continents and reach the three poles, North Pole, South Pole and Everest.

The 42-year-old Park reached the 14 highest Himalayan peaks in the shortest period of time (8 years and 2 months) in the world and also holds the Guinness record for ascending the greatest number of 8000-meter Himalayan peaks in one year (six).

In 2004, he set a record for reaching the South Pole in the shortest period of time (44 days) and accomplished the feat by simply walking on foot without any re-supply of food.

PARK Young Seok makes climbing the world's highest peaks look so easy.


MARAT Safin returns to Jiri Novak. AP

Nadal overtakes Federer's 2005 victory total

ROME—Rafael Nadal is tearing his way through the clay-court season.

The 18-year-old Spaniard overtook Roger Federer for most wins on tour this season with a 6-0, 6-2 victory Tuesday over Mikhail Youzhny in the first round of the Rome Masters.

Nadal is now 36-6 this year. Top-ranked Federer, who pulled out of the Rome tournament with an injury to both of his feet, is 35-2.

"I'm playing good. I won the last two tournaments I played," Nadal said, referring to his titles in Monte Carlo and Barcelona.

Three-time French Open winner Gustavo Kuerten believes Nadal has already established himself as the favorite for this year's tournament in Paris—even though Nadal has never played at Roland Garros.

"He is winning every tournament he plays. He's beating everybody," Kuerten said.

The Rome Masters is a major clay-court tune-up for the French Open, which begins May 23.

Andre Agassi has yet to play Nadal, but the eight-time Grand Slam winner has taken notice.

"He has a phenomenal forehand when he's set, moves unbelievable, and is a great competitor," Agassi said.

Nadal is the first left-hander ranked in the Top-10 in five years.

In a late match, defending champion Carlos Moya was upset by Italian wild card Potito Starace, 6-4, 7-6 (7).

Moya, who said he felt obliged to make an appearance after winning last year, said he was bothered by the right shoulder injury that forced him to retire against Tommy Robredo in the Estoril semifinals Saturday.

"It bothers me on every single shot," Moya said. "It was much better than Saturday though. Now I have a week off and then I'll check how it is in Hamburg for the French."

Earlier, Australian Open champion Marat Safin and French Open runner-up Guillermo Coria each needed three sets to win their opening matches.

The second-seeded Safin rallied to beat Jiri Novak, 6-7 (3), 6-1, 6-1, and Coria used just one service break to edge Fernando Gonzalez, 7-6 (5), 5-7, 6-4.

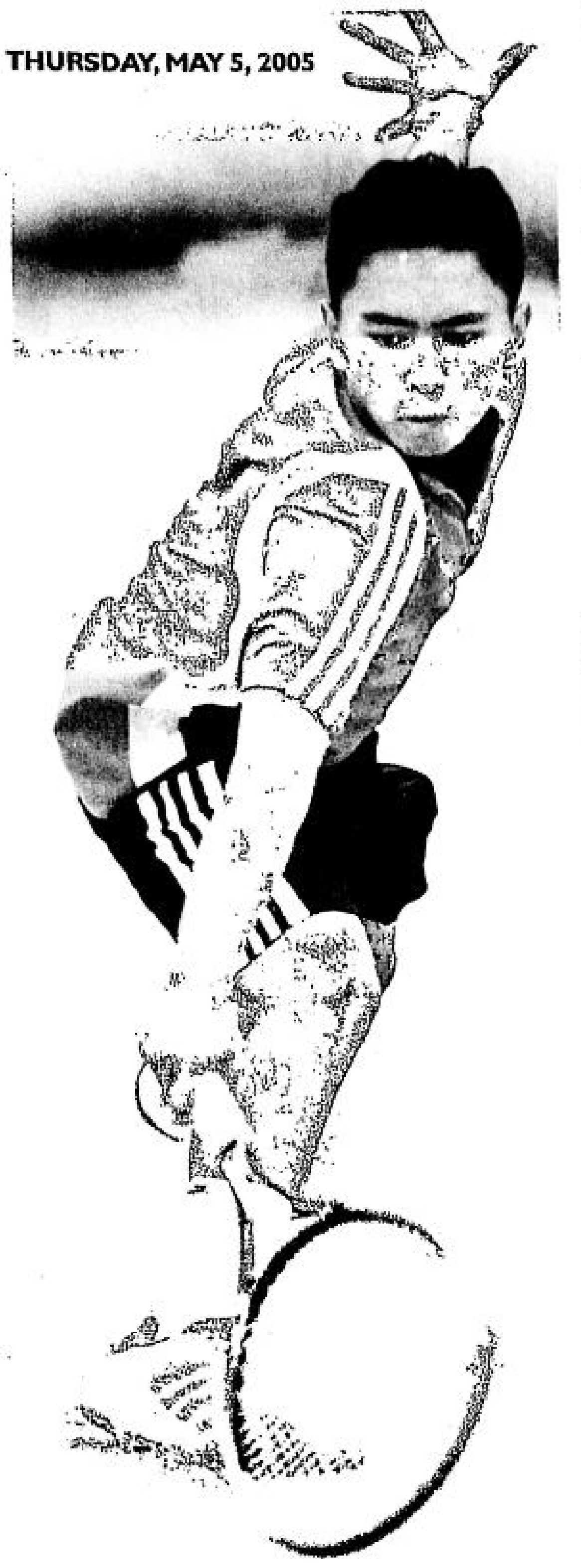
French Open winner Gaston Gaudio, seeded third, beat Slovakia's Karol Beck 6-4, 6-3.

Eighth-seeded David Nalbandian, last year's Rome runner-up, was beaten in three sets by France's Fabrice Santoro 6-4, 1-6, 6-4, and Julien Benneteau eliminated the 13th-seeded Robredo 6-1, 6-0.

Nadal, who also moved to a tour-best 26-2 record on clay this season, won in 60 minutes over an opponent who had been sidelined since March with a knee injury.

Safin surrendered a 5-2 lead in the first set before storming through the final two sets.

As Safin connected on a serve in the first set, his racket broke and he was left holding only the grip, prompting him to entertain the crowd by flexing and pointing to his right arm. AP



BARTE returns to India's Peter. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

JR DAVIS CUP

RP boys overcome gritty Indians, nail q'final slot

KYLE Joshua Dandan survived a tough second set to turn back India's No.1 Kinshuk Sharma, 6-1, 7-6 (16-14), yesterday and power the Philippines into the quarterfinals of the Junior Davis Cup Asia-Oceania qualifying zone at the Manila Polo Club covered courts in Makati.

Dandan, the only Filipino in the ITF Under 16 Touring Team, beat the a gritty Kinshuk Sharma, in the second singles to clinch a hard-earned 2-0 victory for the Philippines, which topped Group 2 with an unbeaten slate in three matches.

Ralph Kevin Barte delivered the first point for the Filipinos with a similarly high-wire 6-0, 2-6, 6-4 decision of India's Agnel Gladwin Peter in the first singles.

Dandan and Barte were playing Navneetha Kannan Baskaran and Sharma in a no-bearing doubles tie at presstime.

The Philippines' third straight victory topped the table in Group 2 and set it up against seventh seed and Group 4 top-notcher Chinese Taipei at 10 a.m today.

Dandan and Pablo Olivarez II were nominated to play in the doubles against Sharma and Navneetha Kannan Baskaran later in the day.

"It was a tough match," said the 15-year-old Dandan, who lost to Sharma in an ITF Junior Circuit in Malaysia early this year. "Sharma played so good. I had to work for every point because it's hard to adjust to his serve and volley game."

In the day's most stunning reversal, the Taiwanese upset the fifth seeded Indonesians, 2-1, as Huang Hsu-chun outclassed Lenz Theodor, 6-1, 6-1, and Peng Hsien-yin overpowered Agung Bagus Dewantoro, 6-2, 6-2.

Dewantoro later paired with Dwi Asmara to defeat Huang and Chun Teu, 6-3, 6-4, and give Indonesia a consolation win.

Top seed Australia, second seed Japan and third seed Thailand also secured berths in the single round-robin quarterfinals of this event presented by BNP Paribas and supported by Wilson balls and Astoria Plaza Hotel.

Australia overwhelmed Hong Kong, 3-0, with victories coming from Stephen Donald over Ryan WanTat Cheung, 6-2, 6-1, Patrick Nicholls over Ambrose Wong, 6-0, 6-1, and Joel Linder and Donald over Ryan Cheung Wan-Tat and Wong, 6-1, 6-0.

Japan assured itself of a seat in the next round by downing New Zealand, 2-0, and Thailand routed Malaysia, 3-0, to sweep Group 2.

MayniLa 9-ball bets too tough for Batangas

ERIC Sandoval played the lead role for Team MayniLa as it blasted Team Batangas, 6-3, for its third win in a row in the TM 9-Ball Champions League billiards tournament at the SM Supermall in Bicutan on Monday.

Sandoval shone with female teammate Ruby Merces as Team MayniLA, handled by the Manila mayor's son, Ali Atienza, remained the only unbeaten team in the tournament sponsored by Touch Mobile and supported by Brunswick, Accel and SM Supermalls.

It was Team Batangas' second loss in three matches.

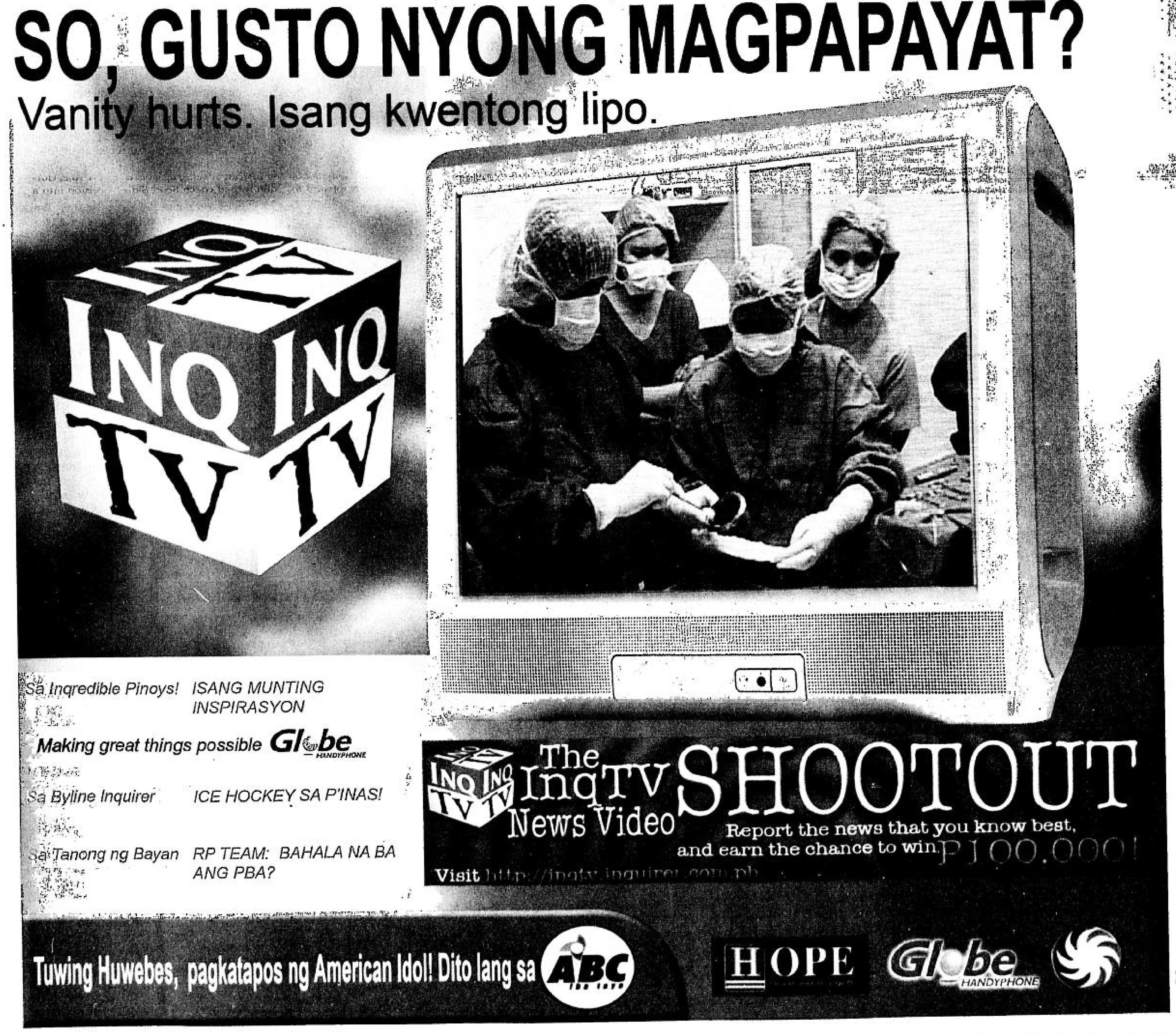
Team Makati of Councilor Rico J. Puno, led by Taco Master award candidate Toni Ann Nobleza, gained ground by posting its second straight win at the expense of Team Cavite of Gov. Ayong Maliksi, 6-4. Makati gained a share of second place with Pampanga at 2-1.

Despite a sub-par performance, Team Pampanga still dealt host Parañaque, 6-3, of Vice Mayor Anjo Yllana its second defeat in three matches, the same cards of Team Pangasinan of Rep. Mark Coyanco and Team Pasig of Rep. Dodot Jaworski.

Pangasinan downed Pasig, 6-2, also Monday.

Highlights of the Parañaque-Batangas match will be featured at 9:30 tonight in the TM 9-Ball, Ang Bagong Sibol program on IBC-13. Peter Martin and Pia Boren host the show.

MAKATI'S Toni Ann Nobleza in action against Cavite.



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Constantine bows out of 'American Idol'

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

ONE of the most unexpected developments in the popular singing search show, "American Idol," has been the consistently good showing of its two finalists from the world of rock 'n' roll, **Constantine Maroulis** and **Bo Bice.**

When the two rockers made it to the tilt's final 12, there were music industry observers who feared that they would be among the first to be eliminated. Based on the competition's past three editions, its jurors and viewer-voters appeared to favor balladeers, R&B, mainstream jazz and folk performers.

But the times have obviously changed, and viewers' musical preferences along with them: Two weeks ago, both Constantine and Bo were ranked among the most popular of the seven remaining finalists in the contest, along with **Carrie Underwood** and **Vonzell Solomon.**

MAROULIS: The rocker who would be star IDOLONFOX

In fact, there were observers who believed that Constantine would end up among the final three, and could have romped off with the tilt's top plum. As for Bo, he was also expected to keep putting up a good fight, but it was generally conceded that Constantine had greater stellar charisma.

The way viewer-voters keep confounding predictions, however, some thought that Bo could spring a surprise on everybody and end up doing even better than Constantine. At this stage of the finals, who could really say?

Well, that unexpected denouement was what happened last week, when the then high-flying Constantine bit the dust, and didn't make it to the tilt's final field of five. To make things worse, he did even more poorly than **Scott Savol**, the controversial survivor who was advised by judge **Simon Cowell** to "pack your luggage, because you're going home this week."

Well, it was Constantine who had to pack his bags and leave the competition—a shocking defeat that raised howls all over the land. As a female colleague wailed, "Now, with Constantine gone, we have no more reason to watch 'American Idol'—the thrill is gone!"

Yes, Constantine thrilled many viewers with his combination of rocker edginess and sexy charisma. So, why did he finally stumble? His poor choice of song the day before could have had something to do with it, but the biggest factor could have been the US text-voters' subjective estimation of talent.

Despite Constantine's unexpected departure, however, this year's edition has been unique because it's given a boost to the rock musical genre that it didn't get in the past. This revived interest in rock effectively harks back to the '50s and '60s, when rock 'n' roll became so popular that it shook the musical scene down to its very foundation.

But Constantine and Bo are no **Elvis Presley** clones. Where Elvis' pelvic moves were planned and executed almost like choreography, the two young rockers are more spontaneous with their gyrations.

This is in keeping with today's more natural musical moods, which favor feeling rather than form. Our two rockers are effective exponents of this reorientation, and are thus able to appeal, not just to hard-core rock aficionados, but also to the mainstream audience.

Trouble was, Constantine's appeal flagged and the US TV audience rejected him at the time when he needed its support most. That's a bitter pill for the singer and his fans to swallow—but hopes are high that Constantine. will still become a singing star despite his defeat. Should that happen, that would be the sweetest revenge of all.

Meanwhile, the inexorable elimination process continues on "American Idol," with the five remaining finalists (Carrie, Bo, Scott, Anthony and Vonzell) about to be cut down to four today. Will Scott continue to survive?—Great Scott!

Movies on TV

ON HBO today at 10 a.m., "Zoolander." 2:45 p.m., "Frances." 5:05 p.m., "One True Thing." 9 p.m., "The Matrix Revolutions." May 6 at 6 a.m., "That Championship Season." 7:45 a.m., "The Remains of the Day." 12:30 a.m., "A Man Apart."

On Cinemax today at 2 p.m., "A League of Their Own." May 6 at 7 p.m., "Simone." 9 p.m., "Money Talks."

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2 (DOLBY) XXX 2 PG13
3 (DOLBY) CLOSED
4 (DOLBY) CLOSED
PREMIERE
(DOLBY) GUESS WHO PG13

CINEMA 2000
Cinema 2000 Waltermart Makati
Waltermart Center, Chino Roces Ave. cor. Antonio Arnaiz Pio del Pilar, Makati City
Tel 816.4214 / 816.4216
1 XXX - 2 THE NEXT LEVEL
2 RING OF THE NIBELUNG
3 CAN THIS BE LOVE
4 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

SUPER CINERAMA
Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto
tel 733.4238
1 (DOLBY) RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED
5 RESERVED

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274
1 CAN THIS BE LOVE
2 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
3 XXX-2 THE NEXT LEVEL

starmall Movies
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Mandaluyong) tel 724.4986
1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 XXX-2 THE NEXT LEVEL
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX) CAN THIS BE LOVE
5 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

METROPOLIS star
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Alabang) tel 850.4285
1 XXX-2 THE NEXT LEVEL
2 TAGOS SA LAMAN
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED
5 (DOLBY) KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
6 CAN THIS BE LOVE

starmall Movies
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Las Pinas) tel (047) 237.7007
1 (DOLBY)
2 RESERVED

Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72
1 (DGA) KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2 (SDDS) XXX - 2 THE NEXT LEVEL
3 (DTS) THE INTERPRETER
4 GOLD (DTS) GUESS WHO
5 GOLD (DOLBY) THE PACIFIER
6 GOLD (SDDS) PACIFIER
7 GOLD (DOLBY) XXX - 2 THE NEXT LEVEL
8 (SDDS) RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
9 (SDDS) WEDDING DATE
10 (SDDS) CAN THIS BE LOVE

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GUESS WHO
XXX: STATE OF THE UNION
CAN THIS BE LOVE
THE INTERPRETER
KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
SIX
THE WEDDING DATE

ALI MALL CINEMAS
1 CAN THIS BE LOVE
2 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
3 XXX: STATE OF THE UNION
4 BOSO
5 TAGOS SA LAMAN

MARKETPLACE
Mandaluyong tel 533.3851 / 533.3856
1 CAN THIS BE LOVE
2 XXX-2 THE NEXT LEVEL
3 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
4 RESERVED

Universal
(Manila) tel 733.2470
1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03
1 (DOLBY EX) XXX-2 THE NEXT LEVEL
2 CAN THIS BE LOVE
3 (DTS ES) KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
4 SAHARA

Cine Nepo
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.0121
1 CAN THIS BE LOVE
2 XXX-2 THE NEXT LEVEL
3 (DOLBY) KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
4 (DTS) SAHARA

Cine Nepo
(Dagupan City) tel (075) 515.8489
1 CAN THIS BE LOVE
2 WEDDING DATE
3 (DOLBY) SHAOLIN VS' EVILDEAD
4 (DTS) THE PACIFIER

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007
1 HIDE AND SEEK
2 ONG BAK

EASTWOOD CINEMAS
(Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave (C-5) Quezon City)
tel 687.6963 or 72
1 (DOLBY) XXX 2
2 (DOLBY) KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
3 (DOLBY) THE INTERPRETER
4 (DOLBY) GUESS WHO

CINEMA 2000
Movie Theatres of the New Millenium

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383
1 SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS
2 (DTS) CAN THIS BE LOVE
3 (DOLBY) KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
4 XXX - 2 THE NEXT LEVEL

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146
1 CAN THIS BE LOVE
2 (DOLBY) XXX - 2 THE NEXT LEVEL
3 (DTS) KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
4 SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771
1 SHAOLIN VS' EVIL DEAD
2 CAN THIS BE LOVE
3 (DOLBY) PACIFIER

Cinema 2000 Metrotown
(Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729
1 SAMARA (RING - 2)
2 CAN THIS BE LOVE
3 (DOLBY) PACIFIER
4 (DTS) MILLION DOLLAR BABY

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Plaridel) tel (044) 795.3320
1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2 CAN THIS BE LOVE
3 (DOLBY) XXX-2 THE NEXT LEVEL

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 (SDDS) LAST ERUPTION
2 TAGOS SA LAMAN
3 SA PILING NG MGA BELYAS
4 (DTS)

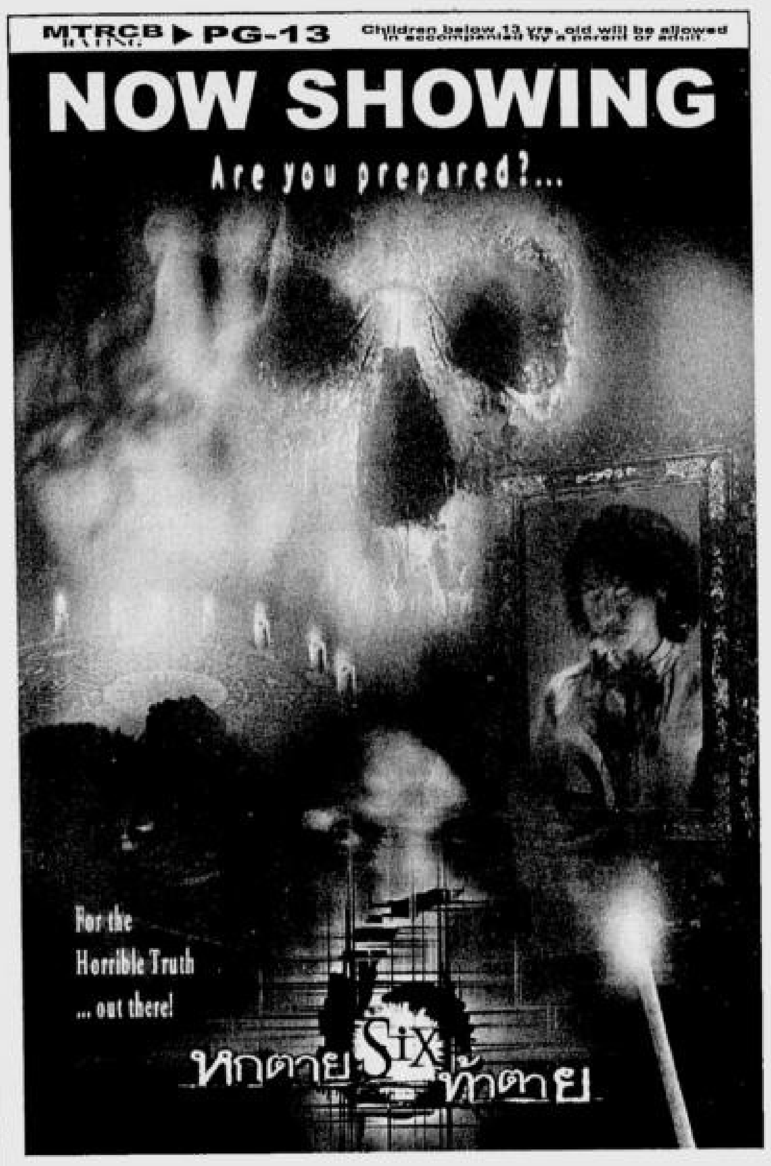
Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202
1 (DOLBY) XXX-2 THE NEXT LEVEL
2 CAN THIS BE LOVE
3 (DTS) KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
4 PARAISO
5 SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANT

Mega Center Mall
(Cabanatuan City) tel (044) 463.3283
1 SAHARA
2 ALONE IN THE DARK
3 (DTS) PACIFIER
4 (DOLBY) CAN THIS BE LOVE

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790
1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2 XXX-2 THE NEXT LEVEL
3 SAHARA
4 CAN THIS BE LOVE

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029
1 SA PILING NG MGA BELYAS
2 XXX-2 THE NEXT LEVEL

MOVIES / SCHEDULES / PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE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GUESS WHO
Bernie Mac, Ashton Kutcher
XXX: STATE OF THE UNION
Ice Cube, Samuel L. Jackson
CAN THIS BE LOVE
Sandara Park, Hero Angeles
THE INTERPRETER
Nicole Kidman
KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
Orlando Bloom, Liam Neeson
SIX
(Thailand Horror Film)
THE WEDDING DATE
Debra Messing, D Mulroney

ALI MALL CINEMAS
❶ **CAN THIS BE LOVE** Sandara Park, Hero Angeles
❷ **KINGDOM OF HEAVEN** Orlando Bloom, Liam Neeson
❸ **XXX: STATE OF THE UNION** Ice Cube, Samuel L. Jackson
❹ **BOSO** Katya Santos, Jefrey Quizon
❺ **TAGOS SA LAMAN** Kat de Santos
DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

ARANETA COLISEUM EVENTS
2005 PBA FIESTA CONFERENCE May 6
4:45pm Red Bull vs .Shell / 7:35pm Talk N Text vs Coke
THE 'C' SHOW
May 21, Saturday, 8pm
KEVYN LETTAU: MEMORIES OF LOVE
May 14, Saturday, 8pm
ASHANTI LIVE IN MANILA
May 26, Thursday, 8pm

CENTER EVENTS
GATEWAY MALL	*The Saturday Group Art Exhibit Featuring the combined works of the premier artists' group in the country including Mauro "Malang" Santos. May 2 to 15, Upper Ground Floor, Gateway Mall*
NEW STORES	*Fully Booked (Level 2), Time Zone (Level 3), Cello (Ground Floor) & Kashleca (Level 3) at Gateway Mall*
PERFORMANCES	*Tropicana, John Lesaca & Buhay featuring Tots Tolentino are set to perform on May 6, 7 & 8 at The Gateway Pavilion.*

LOG ON TO www.aranetacenter.net FOR MORE DETAILS OR TO SUBSCRIBE TO OUR WEEKLY E-MAIL ENTERTAINMENT UPDATES

Buboy's Sunshine is pregnant again

IT WILL be an extra-special Mother's Day for **Sunshine Cruz** because she's infanticipating again! She gushed: "Buboy (**Cesar Montano**) and I didn't plan this but we're thankful because it's another blessing. I'm one month pregnant. Funny thing is, our youngest daughter just turned 8 months. *Wala pa siyang* teeth and yet she'll become an *ate* already!" A few months ago, Shine and Buboy renewed their vows in Thailand. I teased her, "So it's a honeymoon baby?" She smiled. "Nope. Made in the US when we watched Pacquiao's match in Las Vegas and had a screening of 'Panaghoy sa Suba' in San Francisco. We might leave again for Hawaii on May 11 for Fiesta Filipino. Buboy's leaving for Cannes 'cause 'Panaghoy' is included in the screening of new category na Movie of the World. His other movie, 'Bagong Buwan,' is also gonna be screened . I may not be able to join him 'cause it will be tiring."

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Ann Carvajal

She craves fried eggs with catsup, and loves looking at **Angel Locsin**'s face. The couple already have two adorable daughters (**Angelina Isabelle**, 3, and **Samantha Angelene**, 8 months). They hope to have a boy this time, but if it's another girl, it's "okay *lang*" with them.

"Buboy wants to name the baby Angel Francesa or Angelo Miguel. But definitely this will be the last," Shine said. I want to give [the kids] my full attention especially during their formative years."

Just like most pregnant women, she admitted, she becomes super-sensitive "I want Buboy to always make me feel that I'm still sexy even when my tummy is bulging already. *Selosa?* ... Hmmm ... *Isa lang ang pinagselosan ko.* Beauty Queen. Long time ago *na yun.*" Shine revealed.

This beautiful couple's marriage has stood the cruel test of show biz controversies.

With the coming of their third baby, their bond is expected to be further strengthened.

CESAR and Sunshine's kids, Isabelle and Sam

All lies

REGINE Tolentino has this to say about **Celso de Los Angeles'** (chair of the National Home Mortgage & Finance Corp.) accusations against her.

"Lies, all of it. I have evidence to prove this. He is trying to destroy me because of political ambition and he is bitter because he did not get what he wanted. I can't tell the whole story now because my lawyer has advised me not to. I know that in the end I will be vindicated. This scandal has made me realize who my true friends are. That's my best consolation."

For sure, the belly dancing queen has enough fire in her belly to hurdle this legal battle!

Thoroughly enjoyable

I THOROUGHLY enjoyed watching "Extra Challenge's" episode the past two days wherein my funky sistah Dr. **Vicki Belo** and *Manay* **Lolit Solis** traded lives for a day. You can catch the remaining episode this week. Imagine Dr. Vicki giving the dogs a bath, *Manay* trying Vicki's workout poledancing, Vicki going to market in Binangonan to buy ingredients for *pinakbet*, *Manay* teaching **Ethel Booba** how to make "*harbat*."

Vicki herself discovers how *Manay* became a *harbatera* when she visits Sampaloc, where Manay grew up. It's an extra-hilarious episode!

Heard that the ever kind-hearted Vicki gave her talent fee to Lolit. She did it all in the spirit of fun!

No regrets

DIRECTOR non-pareil **Jeffrey Jeturian** is quite disappointed that for the first time his film "Minsan Pa" is not nominated for Best Picture in Urian and the FAP Awards.

But that does not stop him from making even more worthwhile films. He just wrapped up "Bikini Open" for Seiko Films. He calls it a "mock-cumentary." In the film Jeturian satirizes public affairs programs that inject entertainment into their content, and give priority to entertainment rather than the news, sometimes at the expense of objectivity and truth. "It's actually a satire, different from a sex-comedy that you watch basically for the laughs," Jeturian says.

"Bikini Open" will open your eyes to what really goes on behind the scenes in a pageant.

Guess who?

GUESS who this singer is! He is into all-gay sexcapades. The crooner scouts for "participants" in the gym. He has the habit of asking his sexmate to take a picture of his, uh, equipment!

He's probably living up to what gays call "dance and sing."

ERRATUM: In my previous column I wrote that I spotted **Nina Castro** with her boyfriend Vince. It should have been **Niña Corpuz**, the lovely TV personality.

(For feedback, e-mail wateringholeshangrila@yahoo.com or dollyanne@truefaithband.com)

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GUESS WHO PG13	KINGDOM OF HEAVEN PG13	XXX 2: THE NEXT LEVEL PG13
THE INTERPRETER PG13	CAN THIS BE LOVE GP	KINGDOM OF HEAVEN PG13

Items that tell a story...

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① KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
MTRCB: PG-13
12:55, 4:00, 7:05, 10:10 LMF

② XXX 2
MTRCB: PG-13
12:20, 2:45, 5:10, 7:35, 10:00 LMF

③ (CLOSED)

④ (CLOSED)

PREMIERE THEATRE GUESS WHO
MTRCB: PG-13 11:30, 2:05, 4:40, 7:15, 9:50 LMF
Movies and schedules are subject to change without prior notice

Get Your Star Wars Movie Tickets Early!

Be one of the first to catch the simultaneous U.S. screening of Star Wars: Episode III Revenge of the Sith at the Shang Cineplex on May 18! Premiere screening starts at 10:00pm.

Advance tickets* for sale at no extra service fee from May 6, 2005 onwards. Available at the Shang Cineplex ticket counters at Level 6 and the ticket booth at Level 1.

* Selected screenings from May 18-22

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CINEMA 1
KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
10:30,1:25,4:20,7:15,10:10
PG13

CINEMA 2
TRIPLE X 2
10:50 , 1:05 , 3:20 , 5:35 , 7:50, 10:10
PG13

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1 XXX 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
10:55, 1:20, 3:45, 6:10, 8:35, 11:00
PG-13

2 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
11:00, 2:00, 5:00
8:00, 11:00
PG-13

3 THE INTERPRETER
12:05, 2:55, 5:45
8:35, 11:10
PG-13

4 GUESS WHO?
12:35, 3:10, 5:45
8:20, 10:50
PG-13

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KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

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7:50 / 10:15 LFS / 10:40 LMF / 1:05 END
2. POOH'S HEFFALUMP
11:00 FS / 11:35 MF / 1:25 / 3:15 / 5:05 / 6:55
8:45 / 10:00 LFS / 10:35 LMP / 11:45 END
633-8978

sm megamall cinema 1
KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
11:50 FS / 12:20 MF / 3:10 / 6:00
8:25 LFS / 8:50 LMP / 11:15 END
633-1901

sm cebu cinema
CINEMA 1: xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
11:30 MF / 1:30 / 3:30 / 5:30 / 7:30
9:10 LFS / 9:30 LMF / 11:10 END
CINEMA 3: KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
11:00 MF / 1:39 / 4:16 / 6:53
9:23 LFS/ 9:30 LMF / 12:00 END
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METRO MANILA

sm megamall
1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
3 xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
4 THE INTERPRETER
5 SIX
6 THE WEDDING DATE
7 RESERVED
8 RESERVED
9 RESERVED
10 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
11 POOH HEFFALUMP MOVIE
12 CAN THIS BE LOVE

sm city fairview
1 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
2 SAHARA
3 GUESS WHO
4 xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
5 CAN THIS BE LOVE
6 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
7 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
8 THE PACIFIER
9 SAMARA: RING 2
10 THE INTERPRETER
11 ONG BAK: THE THAI WARRIOR
12 THE WEDDING DATE

sm city north edsa
1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2 CAN THIS BE LOVE
3 RESERVED
4 SIX
5 THE WEDDING DATE
6 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
7 GUESS WHO
8 xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL

sm city manila
1 xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
2 SIX
3 THE WEDDING DATE
4 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
5 FINDING NEVERLAND
6 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
7 GUESS WHO
8 THE INTERPRETER
9 CAN THIS BE LOVE
10 SAHARA
11 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
12 SAMARA: RING 2

sm city sta. mesa
1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2 CAN THIS BE LOVE
3 xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
4 RESERVED
5 RESERVED
6 THE WEDDING DATE
7 SAHARA
8 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
9 SIX
10 GUESS WHO

sm city southmall
1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 SIX
4 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
5 GUESS WHO
6 SAHARA
7 CAN THIS BE LOVE
8 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
9 SAMARA: RING 2
10 xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL

sm city bicutan
1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2 CAN THIS BE LOVE
3 THE INTERPRETER
4 xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL

sm cinema tutuban
1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED

sm supercenter sucat
1 THE JACKET
2 CAN THIS BE LOVE
3 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
4 xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL

LUZON

sm city pampanga
1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2 xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
3 THE PACIFIER
4 THE INTERPRETER
5 SAHARA
6 CAN THIS BE LOVE

sm city baguio
1 xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
2 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
3 CAN THIS BE LOVE
4 THE WEDDING DATE

sm city batangas
1 xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
2 CAN THIS BE LOVE
3 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
4 SAMARA: RING 2

sm city dasmariñas
1 xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
2 CAN THIS BE LOVE
3 THE INTERPRETER
4 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

sm city marilao
1 xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
2 THE JACKET
3 CAN THIS BE LOVE
4 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

sm city bacoor
1 SAMARA: RING 2
2 CAN THIS BE LOVE
3 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
4 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
5 xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
6 CAN THIS BE LOVE
7 THE INTERPRETER
8 SAHARA

sm city lucena
1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2 CAN THIS BE LOVE
3 SPONGEBOB SQUAREPANTS
4 xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL

VISAYAS AND MINDANAO

sm city cebu
1 xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
2 RESERVED
3 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
4 THE WEDDING DATE
5 FINDING NEVERLAND
6 THE PACIFIER
7 SAHARA
8 CAN THIS BE LOVE

sm city iloilo
1 THE PACIFIER
2 RESERVED
3 CAN THIS BE LOVE
4 THE JACKET
5 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
6 xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL
7 RESERVED
8 ONG BAK: THE THAI WARRIOR

sm city davao
1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2 BOOGEYMAN
3 CAN THIS BE LOVE
4 MS. CONGENIALITY 2
5 THE WEDDING DATE
6 xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL

sm city cagayan de oro
1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2 ALONE IN THE DARK
3 CAN THIS BE LOVE
4 xXx 2: THE NEXT LEVEL

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SANTOS-CONCIO

Charo bats for TV self-regulation

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

ABS-CBN has adopted a policy that bans sex-video scandals on its talk shows.

Charo Santos-Concio, executive vice president and head of Entertainment, said this was one concrete step that management had taken to put a stop to scandal TV.

"I've been meeting with our talk show producers and other production people," Santos-Concio told INQUIRER Entertainment. "I even met with the Pami (Professional Artist Managers Inc.) members, and we've come to an agreement."

Pami earlier raised the issue for discussion with network executives. The agreement is summed up in this statement from Santos-Concio: "Let's not air all those sex videos! Pity the victims."

Speaking during a lull in activities last weekend for ABS-CBN's promo blitz in Cebu, Santos-Concio minced no words: "We shouldn't prop ourselves up at the expense of others."

Not that she is blind to her staff's frailties. "Since 'Showbiz Lingo' in 1987, I've always maintained that we shouldn't hurt others."

But she said she could do only so much in a climate of all-out war.

"Sometimes in heat of the competition, they would run to me [and] I would reiterate that some things are not allowed."

In any case, Santos-Concio noted, "Competition is good [because] it brings out the best in [everybody]."

This is why she is unperturbed by moves for self-regulation, initiated by Pami and other groups from the advertising world, she said.

"I think [self-regulation] is the best thing for the TV industry."

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Thursday, May 5, 2005

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Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
ABS-CBN 2	Kapamilya Cinema				Showbiz No. 1 (4:25 PM)	Yu-Gi-Oh! (5:10 PM)	Naruto (5:35 PM)	Vidjoking	TV Patrol World		Kamao	Hiram	Spirits	Memories Of Bali	Stained Glass	Maalaala Mo Kaya			Insider
ABC 5			Problema Nyo, Sagot Ko	EZ Shop	PBA				Sentro	PBA					Big News	American Idol		Inq TV	
GMA 7		Saang Sulok Ng Langit	Now and Forever	Glass Shoes	One Piece	Knockout	Sorcerer Orphen	24 Oras		Extra Challenge		Darna	Encantadia (8:45 PM)	All About Eve (9:15 PM)		Magpakailanman			Saksi
RPN 9	Metro TV Shopping			Hey Arnold!	As Told By Ginger	Wild Thornberries	Sponge Bob	Score Tactics	The Ring	Infamous Murders	NBA On RPN					Newswatch Now	Video Hit Parade	Kasangga Mo Ang Langit	Police Hour
IBC 13		Lifestyle		EZ Shop		Home Shopping Network	IBC Express Balita	Pangarap Kong Jackpot		Home Shopping Network		Asian X-Tour			The Regional Billiards		IBC News Tonite		
JackTV		WWE Smackdown				Mutant League	Heavy Gear	Cinematech	Family Guy	Mad TV		Reno 911	Crank Yankers	South Park	The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	Hip-Hop Nation	Ride With Funk Master Flex	WWE Velocity	
Nickelodeon	Blues Clues	Rugrats	The Fairly Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	All That	Are You Afraid of the Dark?	100 Deeds of Eddie McDowd	The Amanda Show	The Adventures Jimmy Neutron	Fairly Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	As Told By Ginger	Nick Mix						Rugrats
MYX		Urban MYX	MYX Backtrax	Pop MYX	OPM MYX	Take 5	My MYX	MYX Daily Top Ten		Mellow MYX	Rock MYX	Pop MYX	Urban MYX	MYX Presents		My MYX	MYX Backtrax	OPM MYX	Mellow MYX
ETC		Significant Others	Knock First	Blind Date	Fifth Wheel	Elimidate	Change of Heart	Seinfeld	Ambush Makeover	Good Morning Miami	Committed	American Dreams		Queer Eye For The Straight Girl		Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno	
Studio 23				PBL Game 2				Batman Beyond	Project Arms	Wazzup Wazzup	America's Next Top Model			Mess Match		News Central	Oprah		Yes Dear
AXN		Fear Factor (Season V)		CSI: NY (Season I)		The Amazing Race 7		7 Days (Season III)		Alias (Season II)		30 Seconds To Fame	30 Seconds To Fame	Lost		The Contender		Totally Outrageous	
Star World		The Bold & The Beautiful		American Idol	Growing Up Gotti	Ally McBeal		The Simpsons	The Drew Carey Show	Star News Asia	Friends	American Idol	Growing Up Gotti	The Chronicle: News From The Edge/The Simple Life 2	Arrested Development	The Apprentice			American Idol
CNN				Business International		Larry King Live		World News	World Sport	Business International		World News Asia		World News	CNN Business Traveler	World News Asia		World News	World Sport
National Geographic		Frontlines Of Construction		Explorations Powered By Duracell		Evolution		The Snake Wranglers	Croc Chronicles With Dr. Brady Barr	Wow		About Asia		National Geographic Specials		Frontlines Of Construction: Pipe Dream/ Moving The Monsters/Defying Gravity		Explorations Powered By Duracell	
Solar Sports					World Table Tennis C'ships, Q'Finals								NBA TV Daily	NBA Playoffs First Round					Destination Finals
Lifestyle Network	Secret Gardens	The Fix	Mission Organization	Carol Duvall	Molto Mario	Hot Off The Grill	Good Eats	Extreme Cuisine	Unwrapped	Tyler's Ultimate	E! News Weekend		Good Finds	Life & Style		Area		Road & Track	Back To Basics
HBO	Frances (2:45PM)					One True Thing (5:05PM)				A Man Apart (7:15PM)				The Matrix Revolutions			Austin Powers In Gold Member	Legal Eagles (11:05PM)	
Star Movies	Death Becomes Her			Tequila Express (4:15PM)			Unstrung Heroes				Baby's Day Out (7:20PM)			Man In The Mirror			Year Of The Dragon		
Cartoon Network	Scooby-Doo Show	The All New Popeye Show		Tom & Jerry Show	The Woody Woodpecker Show	Sylvester & Tweety Mysteries	Mucha Lucha!	X-Men Evolution	Static Shock	Gundam Wing	Shaman King	Looney Tunes Show		The Powerpuff Girls	Dexter's Laboratory	Time Squad	Thundercats	He-Man & The Masters Of The Universe	Gundam Seed
ESPN	Motorsport Asia	Eng. Premier Football League 04/05				Pool/Snooker Premier Snooker League '05				In The Driver's Seat	LPGA Golf Franklin American Mortgage C'ship				Sportscenter Asia	UEFA Champions League 2004/05			
Disney Channel	Mr Bean: The Animated Series	Totally Spies	The Sleepover Club	Art Attack/Un-talkative Bunny	Buzz Lightyear Star Command	Martin Mystery	Totally Spies	Kim Possible	Mr Bean: The Animated Series	House Of Mouse	Wonderful World Of Disney			My Wife And Kids	That's So Raven	America's Funniest Home Video	According To Jim	Wonderful World Of Disney	
Cinemax				Avenging Angelo				Thrill Seeker			The Survivors Club			Hideaway			Threshold (10:45PM)		
Hallmark Channel	Who's The Boss	Strong Medicine		HCA: The Fairytaler	Sesame Street		Mad About You	Who's The Boss	Bewitched	The District		Strong Medicine		Cavedweller			Sue Thomas: F.B.Eye		The District (11:25PM)
Discovery Channel		Hour Asia				Wild Discovery		Ultimate Discovery		Extreme Machines		Ultimates		Wild Science		Ultimate Discovery		Power Zone	
Sports Plus	Zurich Classic of New Orleans Day3						The Search TV	Raceworld		World's Greatest Auto Shows		World Poker Tour ep.2 Los Angeles				Nascar Aaron's 499 Talladega			
NBN		Taiwan/ Winner TV Shopping		Value Vision	Teledyaryo	Value Vision	Next Stop			Network Forum		Teledyaryo		Sinulog Festival					

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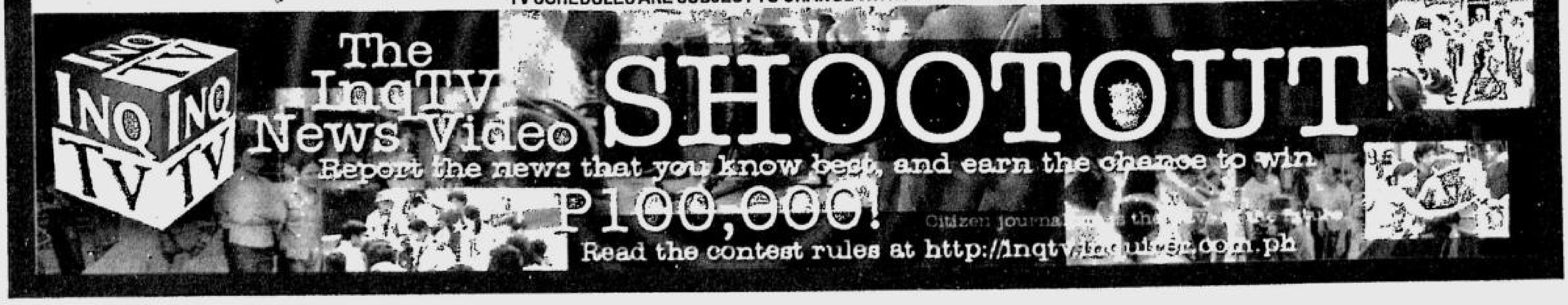
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THE FIGHT with her ex, Phillip Salvador, is not over for Cristina Decena (right), shown here with the actor's former second family, Vivialyn Dunca (center) and daughter Ysa. Story on page A2-3.

Gozon: We did no wrong

By Marinel R. Cruz

CEBU CITY—"As far as I'm concerned, we did nothing wrong. If it's a talk show, it should be free to discuss things that are happening in show biz," declared GMA 7 president and chief executive officer Felipe L. Gozon.

Gozon, speaking with INQUIRER Entertainment, said the network did not practice "irresponsible journalism" when it aired parts of a sex video reportedly featuring ABS-CBN contract star Piolo Pascual.

"This is one of the bad things that's happening in show business. People are now coming up with sex videos, and they are superimposing the image of actors in these videos," Gozon said in an interview at the Waterfront Hotel in Lahug. "This is not good for the industry. This is below the belt."

Right angle

Gozon added: "I asked the staff members of 'Startalk' about this. They said the angle they pursued in this story was, 'Why are things like this happening? Is there somebody behind this, orchestrating this?' That was the direction of the story."

The sex video-scandal on "Startalk" drew reactions not only from ABS-CBN, but also from the Movie Television Review and Classification Board (MTRCB), the Philippine Association of National Advertisers (Pana) and the Professional Artist Managers Inc. (Pami), with the latter even seeking the help of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (Unesco) against scandal-oriented TV shows.

"You see, this happened to our talents first," Gozon pointed out. "This happened to Ethel Booba and to Paolo Bediones. Our story simply wanted to say, *'Heto na naman*, it's happening again."

Ad pullout

Last week, leaders from the Pana, the Pami, the Association of Accredited Advertising Agencies (4 As) and the Advertising Board of the Philippines (Adboard) met to discuss sex video scandals on TV.

In the same week advertisers Coke, Jollibee and Greenwich announced that they had pulled out ads from "The Buzz" (ABS-CBN) and "S-Files" (GMA 7) in response to call for responsible media content.

The advertisers warned the two shows to "shape up" or suffer in terms of advertising revenues.

But president and GMA 7 marketing and production head Meckoy P. Quiogue said the network was not affected by the ad boycott.

"The week before [the boycott] came out in the papers, our load on 'Startalk' and 'S-Files' was 100 percent. The weekend after it was announced, I think our load was 99.5 percent," Quiogue explained. "I think we lost half a minute. I don't think we can attribute that to the boycott. That might have been an advertiser who did not place an ad only that week. However, we've taken the initiative and called the Pana and the 4 As."

GOZON: "It happened to us first." VIC S. EYATID

Meet set

Quiogue said GMA 7 had invited advertising groups this week to a meeting "so they could hear the network's side, so that we could show them how we handled these talk shows and how responsible the stations has been. They have agreed not to do anything until this meeting is held."

LOLIT Solis

Lolit irks MTRCB

THE MOVIE and Television Review and Classification Board has warned talent manager-TV host Lolit Solis against her use of "improper words" on the show biz talk show "Startalk" on GMA 7.

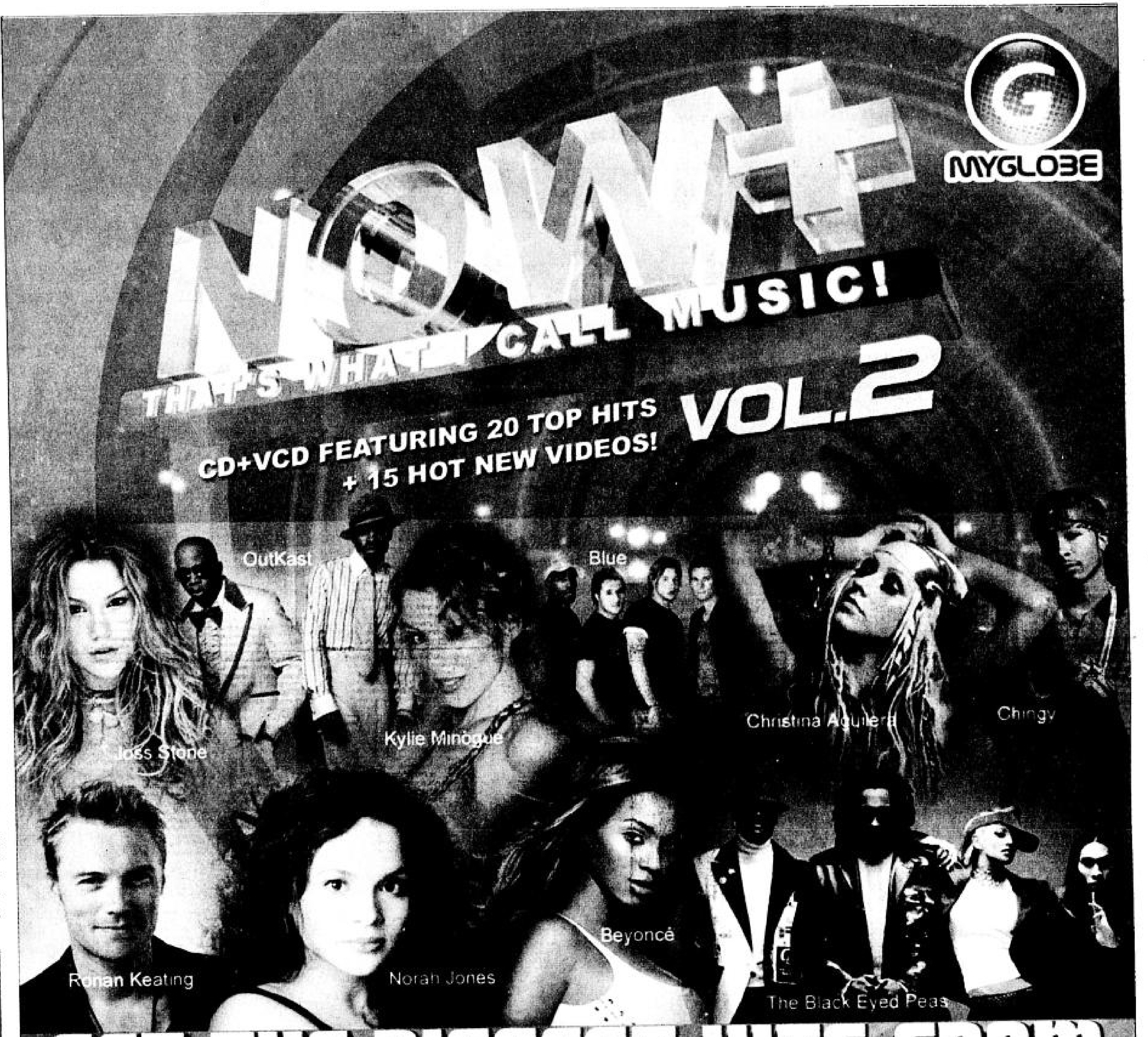
In a memorandum sent to program manager Jose Mari Abacan, the MTRCB protested Solis' statement, "*Namaltos ba ang singit mo?*" on the April 9 episode of the show that she cohosts with Butch Francisco and Lorna Tolentino.

"Repetition of the [same] words or words of similar import will be subject to graver sanctions," MTRCB Chair Marissa Laguardia said in the memorandum.

Abacan, in a letter dated May 3, said the program has "discussed" the MTRCB's position with Solis and furnished her a copy of the memo.

Laguardia ordered "Startalk" to "inform [the Board] of the steps taken to prevent the repetition or the commission of similar or other infractions" of the Board's implementing rules and regulations.

LOLIT/ A2-3



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She Wants To Move	Nerd	EA362
Those Sweet Words	Norah Jones	EA051
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Eyes On You	Jay Sean	EA262
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2 XXX 2
3 SIX
4 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
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6 THE WEDDING DATE
7 SAMARA RING 2
8 THE JACKET
9 GUESS WHO?
10 THE PACIFIER

ERMITA 536-7809 to 12

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2 GUESS WHO?
3 XXX 2
4 THE WEDDING DATE
5 THE INTERPRETER
6 SIX
7 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

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2 THE INTERPRETER
3 THE WEDDING DATE
4 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
5 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
6 XXX 2
7 SIX
8 GUESS WHO?

NOVALICHES 935-3229/31

1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2 XXX 2
3 GUESS WHO?
4 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
5 THE JACKET
6 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
7 RESERVE
8 RESERVE

PIONEER 687-5378

1 XXX 2
2 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
3 SIX
4 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS

CITISQUARE MALABON 288-2575

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2 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
3 SAHARA
4 OK KA, PARE KO

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3 SAHARA
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4 THE INTERPRETER
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3 XXX 2
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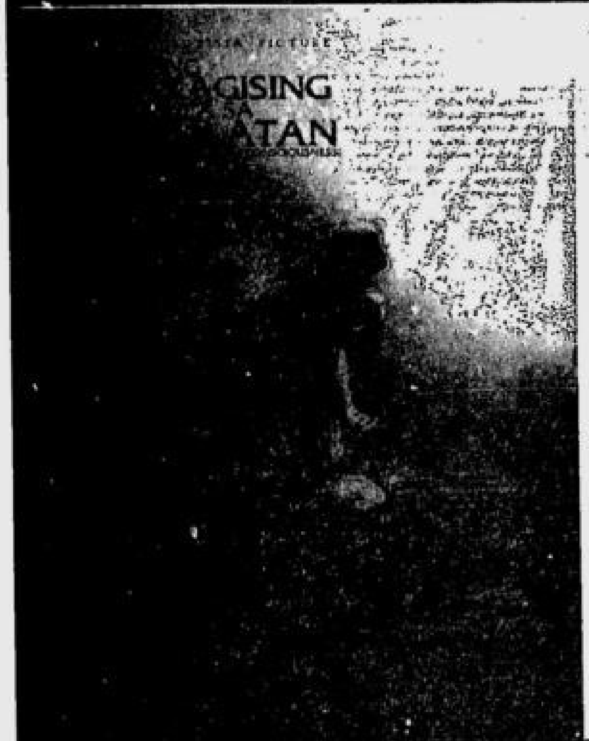
G4	GLORIETTA 4	1 SHATTERED GLASS	2 XXX 2	3 THX KINGDOM OF HEAVEN GUARANTEED SEATS	
		4 THE WEDDING DATE	5 GUESS WHO	6 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN	7 CAN THIS BE LOVE
GB1	GREENBELT 1	1 XXX 2	2 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN		
GB3	GREENBELT 3	1 THX SHATTERED GLASS GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX KINGDOM OF HEAVEN GUARANTEED SEATS		
		3 THE INTERPRETER GUARANTEED SEATS	4 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN GUARANTEED SEATS	5 XXX 2 GUARANTEED SEATS	
ATC	ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX KINGDOM OF HEAVEN	2 XXX 2		
		3 CAN THIS BE LOVE	4 THE INTERPRETER	5 GUESS WHO	
ACC	AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN	2 XXX 2	3 THE WEDDING DATE	4 THE CURSE



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Dismissal of case vs Salvadors refuted

By Marinel R. Cruz

THE LAS Piñas Regional Trial Court has reset to May 10 the hearing of an estafa case against actor Phillip Salvador, to give the Department of Justice enough time to produce the official copy of a resolution on the case that it released last week, INQUIRER Entertainment learned on Wednesday.

The DOJ resolution "directed" the court "to cause the withdrawal" of the estafa case, one of three that businesswoman Cristina Castillo-Decena filed against her former partner Phillip and his elder brother Ramon last year.

"But the court does not have a copy of the DOJ resolution yet," Decena's lawyer Rizal Balbin said. "Only Phillip's lawyer has a copy, which he got from the DOJ."

The resolution was in connection with the case concerning 10 jeepneys that Decena bought in December 2001, ostensibly for management by Ramon. Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez signed the resolution last April 25.

'No estafa'

Gonzalez said the documents Decena presented to support her complaint "hardly proved the estafa ... There is thus no estafa for which respondents should be prosecuted."

But Decena questioned the DOJ decision and threatened to file a complaint against Gonzalez before the Commission on Appointments.

Decena claimed she was denied due process because Gonzalez released a resolution without first attending to "pending incidents" earlier filed by both Decena and the Salvadors.

Lawyer Renato Abad last March 11 requested that the three estafa cases Decena filed against the Salvadors be consolidated. Two cases were filed before the Las Piñas RTC and one in Makati City.

Another pending incident is Decena's request for a copy of the petition for review that the Salvadors filed earlier. Decena's request was filed last April 7..

Ignored

"How could Secretary Gonzalez ignore these requests and immediately come out with a resolution?" Decena demanded. "Does this mean that there are two lanes in the DOJ, the ordinary and the VIP lanes?"

Decena also pointed out that Gonzalez issued a certification on April 25, the same day that the Justice secretary released the resolution. Gonzalez's certification says the Salvadors' request for a review of the court decisions on the last two cases "are already for final review."

Lolit irks . . .

From page A2-1

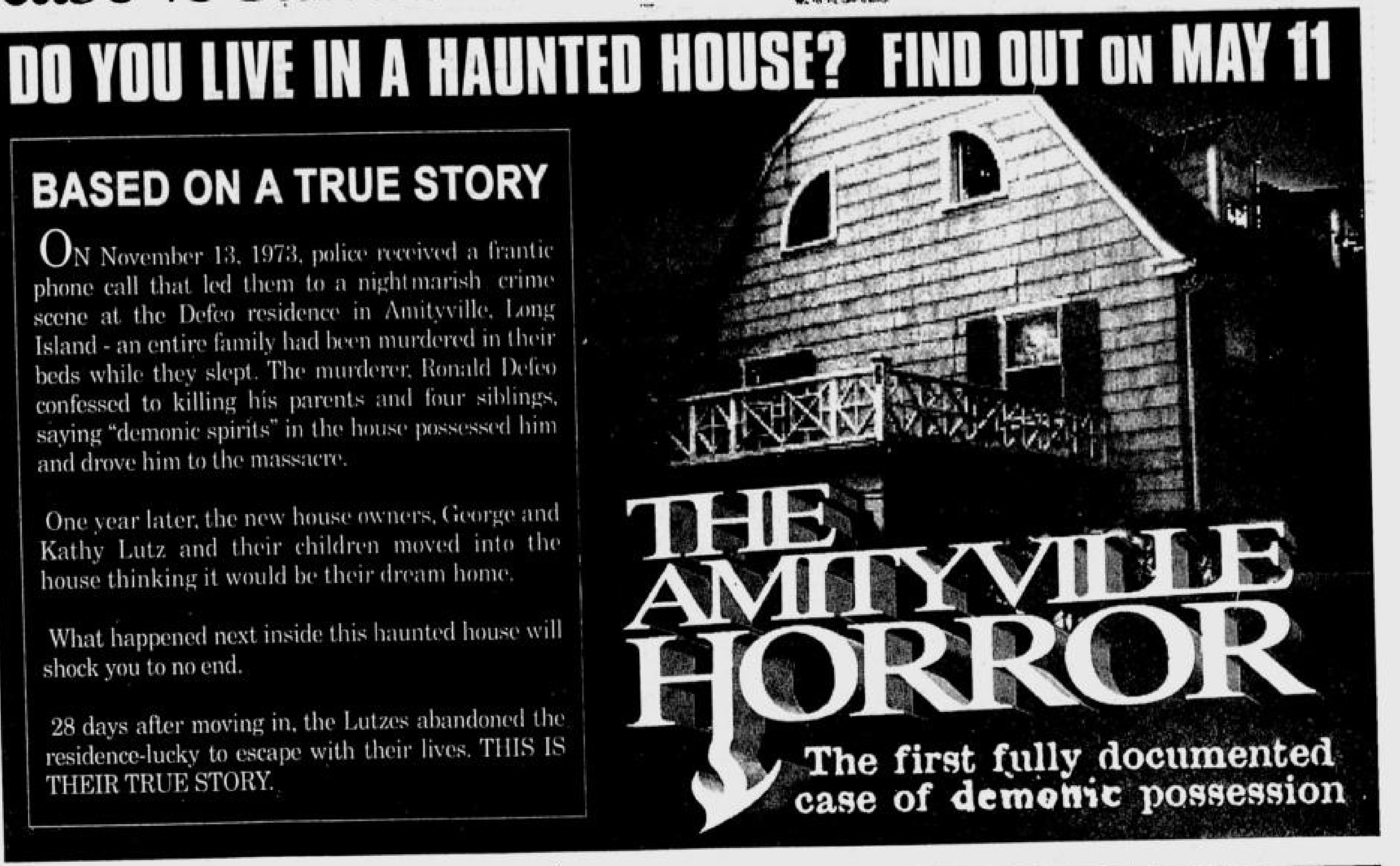
Laguardia, in reaction to a statement issued by Pampanga Rep. Francis Nepomuceno, said she would "resolve to have stricter classification of talk shows."

Nepomuceno earlier accused the MTRCB of "not protecting the rights of audience [to] better viewing." He commended advertising companies for deciding to withdraw their ad sponsorship from "scandalous TV programs such as 'The Buzz' on ABS-CBN and 'S-Files' on GMA 7."

Laguardia said she would discuss the issue with the Board. One remedy, she suggested, was to "push talk shows to late night slots, like 10 p.m. to 5 a.m."

She added: "All the shows [that Nepomuceno] mentioned will be reevaluated and submitted for discussion, if necessary, for stricter classification."

Nepomuceno branded as "garbage programs" shows like "Startalk," "Ek Channel," "Showbiz No. 1," "Going Bulilit," "ASAP," "SOP," "Eat Bulaga," and "Extra Challenge." *Marinel R. Cruz*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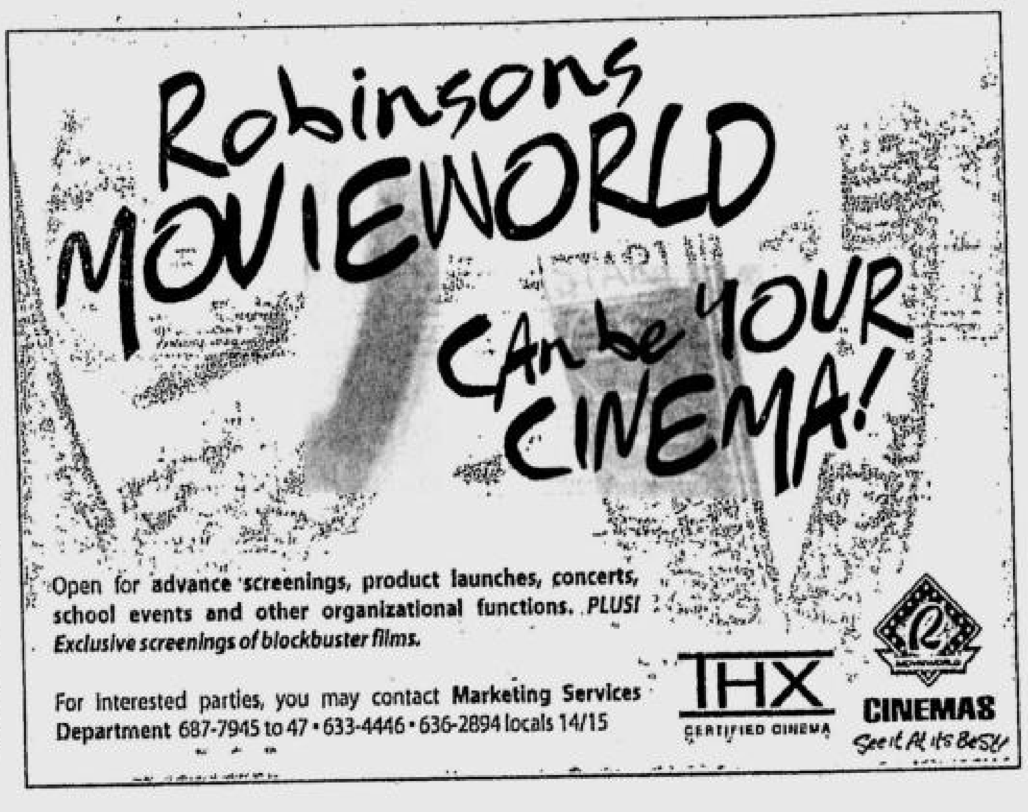
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- Wedding Date Dating Game Show MAY 07 (Saturday) Fountain Area - Robinsons Place BACOLOD
- The Wedding Date Special Advance Screening
  MAY 09 (Monday) Robinsons Movieworld BACOLOD
  MAY 10 (Tuesday) Robinsons Movieworld ILOILO
- Judging of Photo Contest - Cinema Lobby • 7:00 PM
- Special Advance Screening - Cinema 1 • 7:30 PM

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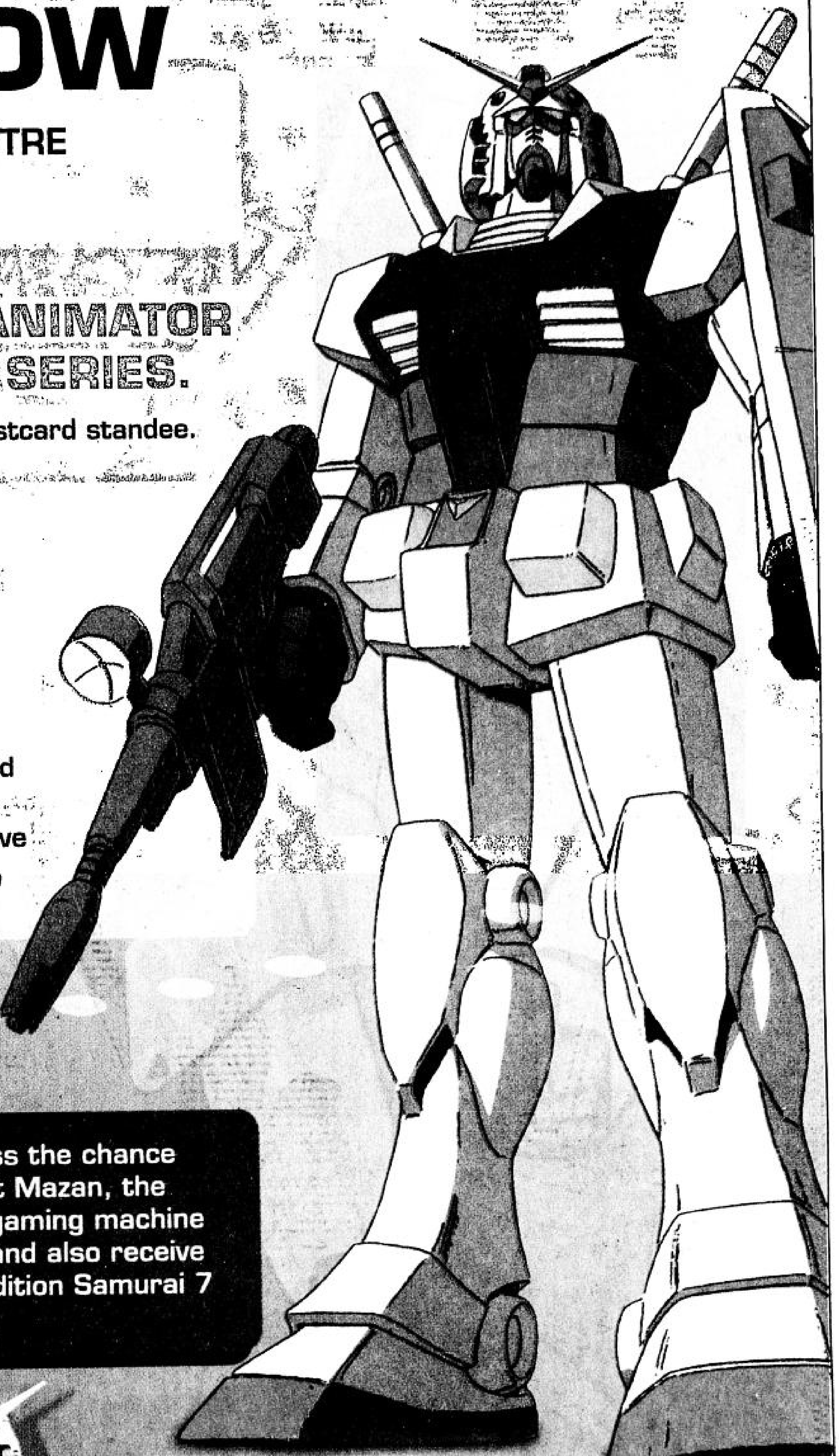

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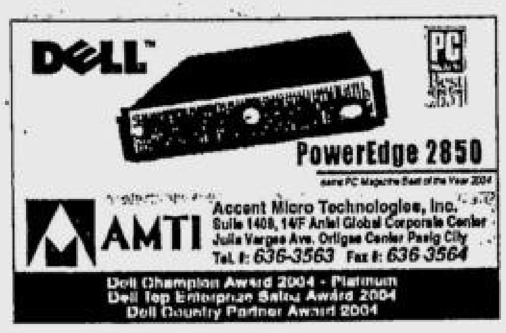
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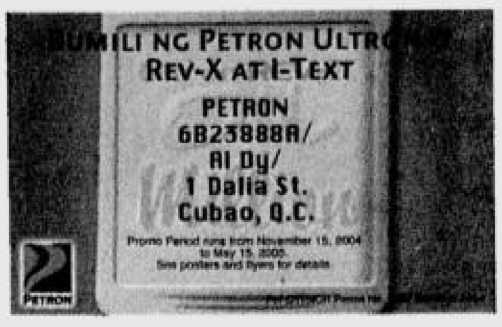
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Yuchengco raising ₱250M for Pacific Plans

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

TAIPAN Alfonso Yuchengco has vowed to raise P250 million from his personal resources to assist the beleaguered Pacific Plans Inc.

Yuchengco said in a statement issued yesterday that although Pacific Plans' problem was a corporate matter, he was doing this in his desire to help parents pay their children's tuition requirements for this year's school opening.

The fund to be raised by the taipan will be used to provide additional tuition support to Pacific Plans' disgruntled customers. Pacific Plans said the details of Yuchengco's fund-raising pledge were being finalized and would be announced shortly.

Pacific Plans, a member of the Yuchengco group of companies, had to seek court assistance in suspending debt payments related mainly to its traditional education plans that have matured.

It had to spin off its 34,000 open-ended or traditional plans to make sure its more than 400,000 fixed-value plans would remain healthy.

The firm's open-ended plans had been bleeding the company after the full deregulation of tuition increases in 1990. Prior to the deregulation, the increases were limited to 10 percent a year.

The company said that without the spin-off, the whole company would have been affected and the problem would have been worse.

The shift in the government's tuition policy doomed the open-ended plans and it was because of this that Pacific Plans stopped selling them in 1992.

In a statement, the company cited an actual example: "We were paid a total of P13,800 on installment and got the last payment in 1995. But we had to pay from 2001 to 2005 a total of P240,000 for a four-year nursing course in Far Eastern University. It is worse when exclusive schools are involved."

To show the sharp increases in tuition, Pacific Plans said that under its FEU example, it paid the school P27,710 in school year 2001-02; P45,184 the following year; P75,481 in 2003-04, and P91,540 for the current schoolyear.

"No company can make P13,800 earn enough to match the gallop in tuition increases. One semester's benefit claim alone exceeds the total payments made by the planholder," Pacific Plans said.

"To cover these increases alone, we must earn 50-percent compounded each year for 10 years. And we didn't have 10 years, let alone the 50-percent income," it added.

The company said that when it spun off the fixed-value plans to Lifetime Plans last August, its objective was to put Pacific Plans back on its feet. "We thought we could make it work. We even have a product that other pre-need companies think is excellent. We wanted to outsource everything to keep expenses down," PPI said.

Gov't debt hits ₱4.08T

By Michelle V. Remo

THE NATIONAL government's debt stock has reached P4.08 trillion as of end-February this year as the Arroyo administration continued to borrow both from local and foreign creditors to finance its huge budget deficit.

Documents from the Bureau of Treasury showed that the latest debt figure was 1.8 percent higher than the P4.01 trillion recorded in January.

Of the P4.08-trillion accumulated debt of the national government, 15.1 percent will mature in the short-term, 26.4 percent over the medium term, and 58.5 percent in the long term.

Of the total, P2.04 trillion was borrowed domestically, with the remaining P2.04 trillion generated offshore.

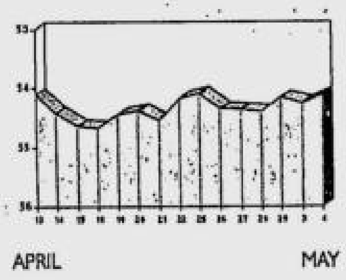
National Treasurer Omar Cruz said the government was trying to veer toward more local rather than foreign borrowings

GOV'T/ B2

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES

PESO-DOLLAR RATE



PESO-DOLLAR RATE

₱ 54.105 = $ 1

As of 5 p.m., May 4, 2005

¥ 105.38 = $ 1

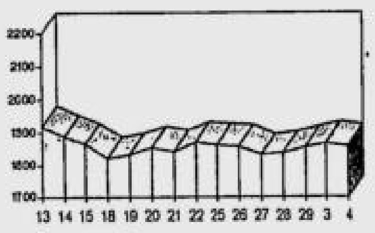
As of 5 p.m., May 2, 2005

GOLD: $429.00-429.50

per ounce Hong Kong, May 4, 2005

STOCK MARKET

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B4)

Shares close flat

SHARE prices closed flat after a lethargic session yesterday as the market consolidated in the absence of fresh positive leads, dealers said.

They said investors largely ignored the widely expected quarter-percentage-point rise in US interest rates. The Philippine central bank later said it was unlikely to adjust its own rates during its own board meeting today.

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index added 1.06 points at 1,866.17, the high after a day-low of 1,858.22. Turnover was 856 million shares worth P1.1 billion.

Losers beat gainers 42 to 36, with 50 stocks unchanged.

"Most of the volumes being traded in the past days are coming from foreign investors who have been dumping their stocks," said Ron Rodrigo of Accord Capital Equities.

"The concern here is that if turnover remains thin and eventually dries up, (the) market would be dependent on local investors, which is a scenario that is unlikely to be sustainable."

Dealers said investors were holding fire as Congress continues to discuss proposed amendments to a value-added tax (VAT) bill, the cornerstone of President Gloria Arroyo's bid to expand the government's narrow revenue base.

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BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

SCHOOL opening is just about a month away, and already we hear that magnificent sound coming from the parents.

They are crying out: "Where will we get the enrollment money?"

Nowadays, even if the parents bought, stole, or borrowed some education pre-need plans, they are not safe anymore.

Houston, the industry has a problem. And it's money, the same problem hounding the semi-bankrupt cute administration of Gloriaetta.

Based on reports, which were mostly leaked to media by the pre-need industry's regulator, the SEC itself, the industry has a liquidity problem.

In this case, "liquidity" has nothing to do with frontal sanitary disposal in the bathroom. It is actually, in investment parlance, ready cash.

The pre-need industry does not have enough of it. The funds of the industry are invested in bonds and hard assets that are not easily convertible to cash. In short, trouble!

* * *

WHAT do we do now?

For one, the SEC wants to kill the entire industry by imposing impossible rules on ALL pre-need companies, seemingly to favor another business called insurance.

And then, believing perhaps that the judiciary holds the solutions to our problems as a nation, we go to court. Sure, nice move! Only, the lawyers make all the money!

Yet, this is a serious problem. It is not just about education plans, although these are the pre-need products hugging the headlines at the moment.

Perhaps, the president of Bank of Commerce, Raul de Mesa, sums it up well: "The problem runs from the womb all the way to the tomb."

Well, when the mother gives birth, she uses a pre-need health plan. As the child reaches school age, the parents draw on a pre-need education plan.

To support themselves in their old age, the same parents resort to the pre-need pension plan. Sooner or later, since we must all go there, they may need the pre-need memorial plan.

There—from birth to death, from womb to tomb! That's the pre-need industry! Kill it and you will have a restless population!

* * *

BY the way, De Mesa's bank is one of the trustees of CAP, currently at the center of this pre-need storm, owing to its being the biggest with more than 700,000 plan holders.

Somebody filed a "class suit" against CAP and Bank of Commerce. Never mind that the "somebody" is known as a professional class suit filer, having sued other companies, with all the cases simply dismissed by the courts.

The point is, anyway, I thought that De Mesa has a valid point, and we cannot let the industry just collapse.

He thinks that the solution must come from all the sectors involved in pre-need, namely, the regulators, the pre-need companies, the trustees, and yes, even the schools, the HMOs, and the funeral homes.

The question is, when are they going to sit down to come up with a workable plan, starting with, say, a liquidity mechanism for the industry?

Thousands of parents will surely use their education plans this school year. The pre-need firms do not have the "liquidity."

The Bangko Sentral has such a mechanism for banks. Who should do it for pre-need firms—the jueteng lords?

* * *

PART of the problem, according to De Mesa, is the regulatory set-up. Pre-need was a Filipino invention. It was such a new thing to us, and even to the rest of the world, that our regulators never knew, and still do not know, how to treat it.

For instance, De Mesa noted that the SEC came up with new regulations four years ago, specifying the assets in which the pre-need firms can invest their trust funds.

Yet, the very same specific regulations did not provide a period—such as one year, or one day—for the pre-need firms to remit their new sales collection to the trust funds.

Within the SEC itself, Commissioner Jesus Enrique Martinez is leading the commission's (serious?) effort to solve what he calls a "crisis situation."

In a memo to SEC Chair Fe Barin, Martinez wrote:

"The Commission should adjust its attitude toward the industry, in the sense that it is not here solely to police the industry and enforce regulatory compliance, but to help the industry develop, grow and mature, and particularly to assist those in need through creative and appropriate regulatory leeway."

In basketball lingo, how about a little assist!

* * *

PERHAPS the pre-need industry is wanting in correct regulations because, while it is its own different industry, the SEC wanted to regulate it in the same way as insurance firms.

For whose benefit, everybody in the industry knew a long time ago.

The SEC rules were heavily influenced by a US group called Agile.

And that probably inspired the head of the local subsidiary of a New York-based insurance group to put down the industry in media even more.

While reports talked about the "crisis situation" in the industry, our bright insurance guy came out in media, proclaiming his company as shielded from trouble.

His company is now supposedly the leader in education plans, and his gloating seemed to refer to Pacific Plans and CAP, which are in the news as troubled pre-need firms.

The industry has a problem, sure, but it does not need that kind of boasting from anybody, particularly if the big boss of that somebody's parent company is facing criminal suits in New York.

The cases had something to do with the way it did business — a rather questionable way. And here comes the local trigger man, giving us a drawing of nice things from his principals abroad.

And look who's talking. Even our boastful hero has a pending lawsuit filed by some family members, involving hundreds of millions of pesos, prompting his company to talk to a former Cabinet member as his replacement.

Besides, it is well known in the industry that, a few years back, the same guy held a meeting with CAP officers, wanting to take full control of CAP then, with the blessing of the SEC chair at that time, even before all this trouble erupted.

You know — like a white knight. Maybe literally!

* * *

PRE-NEED firms like Pacific Plans, or PPI, may be getting the ire of its plan holders, but at least, this company is doing something about the problem.

Its president, Ernesto Garcia, said that PPI used P1.5 billion of its corporate earnings to pay the runaway tuition that started to zoom up in the early 1990s.

Unfortunately, the company had 34,000 "open-ended" plans, the sale of which the SEC stopped about four years ago.

The open-ended plans, according to Garcia, had become a "cancer." They treated the others who had "fixed value" plans.

Thus, PPI separated the fixed-value plans into another company to shield the plan holders from the problem in the "open-ended" plans.

Castigating PPI for the move are, of course, the holders of the open-ended plans. Its 40,000 or so holders of the "fixed value" plans are rather quiet.

But Garcia revealed that, even before PPI took such a drastic measure, it wrote many schools, wanting to buy—in advance—thousands of scholarships for its beneficiaries.

PPI even offered 10-percent increase in the tuition for the four- and five-year courses for its beneficiaries. Not one of the schools took the offer.

Supercat drops Dumaguete

By Alex V. Pal
PDI Visayas Bureau

DUMAGUETE CITY—After serving Dumaguete travelers for almost 10 years, Supercat went on shore leave, which commuters hope would not last too long.

"We have to say goodbye for now to Dumaguete," Earl Versoza, Supercat brand manager for Cebu, said in a recent news briefing at the Bethel Guest House.

Versoza said this was only temporary, but something that Supercat had to do.

Supercat recently sold two of its vessels, leaving it with only three, to be used for the Iloilo-Bacolod, Calapan-Batangas and Cebu-Ormoc routes.

With the closure of the Dumaguete trips, Versoza said Supercat would soon stop the Cebu-Tabilaran trips.

He did not say when.

Personnel affected by the move were asked to "rest" for a while, or work for other Aboitiz companies, like the Superferry.

While emphasizing that cash flow from the Cebu-Dumaguete route remained positive, Versoza said the market had declined in the last five years as many passengers preferred to travel by land, bringing their cars to Cebu by loading them on barges in Tampi, San Jose town, which connects to Santander town in Cebu's southern tip.

The cost of fuel also added to Supercat's woes.

"The entire fastcraft industry is suffering from the fuel cost. The price of diesel has increased 120 percent since 2002."

"If we increase the fare, the alternative modes of transportation become more attractive," Versoza said.

Dumaguete Mayor Agustin Perdices said the Supercat move might not affect travel between Dumaguete and Cebu as there were several alternatives.

It would be the Dumaguete-Tagbilaran passengers who would be more affected, he said.

Negros Oriental Gov. George Arnaiz, for his part, saw the Supercat move as an opportunity to encourage small airlines to try the Cebu-Dumaguete route.

Philippine Airlines used to fly between Cebu and Dumaguete before the Supercat started its operations in 1996.

PLDT sees ₱8-B net income in Q1

By Clarissa S. Batino

TELECOMMUNICATIONS giant Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. expects to post a net income of at least P8 billion in the first quarter this year, up 53 percent from P8 billion recorded in the same period last year.

PLDT, however, would not be able to repeat the 100-percent increase in profits that it achieved during the first quarter last year.

In the first quarter of 2004, PLDT's profit more than doubled from P2.48 billion in the same period of 2003.

The telecom giant ended 2004 with a record-breaking P28 billion in net income.

PLDT, however, in the first quarter this year would still outperform fierce rival Globe Telecom Inc.

Globe the other day reported a flat growth in earnings to P3.02 billion in the first three months.

PLDT's recurring profits likely reached more than P7 billion, while foreign exchange gains added more than a billion pesos to its three-month earnings.

"Yes, the first quarter this year was better than first quarter 2004. If we include exceptional gains, then the difference would be substantial," said a senior PLDT official.

Sales of PLDT's wireless and fixed-line business accelerated in the first quarter as a result of the price war in the industry.

The group also realized a significant one-time gain from the strengthening of the peso against the US dollar.

The peso averaged at P56.28 as of end-2004 against the end-March average of P54.94.

The company has about $2 billion in debts that it could pay off with fewer pesos when the local currency appreciates against the greenback.

Most analysts pegged PLDT's first quarter results at between P5.2 billion and P6 billion.

Citing the telecom giant's robust growth, Fitch Ratings upgraded the other day PLDT's local currency debt rating to BB plus from BB, and affirmed its dollar debt rating at BB.

Taking out gains derived mostly from Smart Communications Inc.'s acquisition of discounted debts of Pilipino Telephone Corp., PLDT's net profit in 2004 of P25.17 billion still surpassed its twice-upgraded profit target of P24 billion and was 237 percent higher than the adjusted 2003 income of P7.5 billion.

"I would like to think we will achieve something like P27 billion for 2005. Having said that, I would like to caution that there is a great deal of difficulty in forecasting because of foreign exchange movements," said PLDT chair Manuel V. Pangilinan in March when he announced the group's 2004 results.

Gov't debt hits ₱4.08T

From page B1

to minimize the country's exposure to foreign exchange risk. He said that this year, with the budget deficit expected at P180 billion, the government has set a 60:40 borrowing mix in favor of domestic sources.

"We will now borrow more from domestic sources, but it will take some time before it can have a significant impact on the total debt stock," Cruz said.

The P2.04-trillion domestic debt was 1.2 percent higher than the figure recorded in January. The increase was due to borrowings made through the issuances of treasury bills and bonds.

The foreign component, on the other hand, was 2.5 percent higher than the January level. The increase was brought by the $1.5 billion worth of dollar-denominated bonds that the government issued.

Cruz said the latest debt figure of P4.08 trillion reflected a 7-percent increase from the P3.8 trillion recorded in end-2004. But he noted that the increase was partly offset by the strengthening of the peso, as well as of other currencies, against the US dollar, which resulted in a 12-percent reduction in the country's foreign debt.

He said the country's strong balance-of-payments (BOP) position due to foreign exchange inflows such as those coming from exports and foreign portfolio investments, helped strengthen the peso.

"The growth buildup of debt has slowed down, all as a result of positive economic fundamentals," Cruz explained.

The Treasury official also said the decline in the government's budget deficit helped reduce its need to borrow. The expected P180-billion budget deficit for this year is lower than the P187 billion recorded in 2004, and the P199 billion posted in 2003.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of May 4, 2005)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	14,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	26	26	26	26	209,600
Bank of the Phil. Islands	47.5	48	47.5	47.5	1,098,300
China Banking Corp.	660	680	660	680	4,390
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.65	0.68	0.65	0.68	210,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	47	47	45	47	109,000
International Exch. Bank	18	18	18	18	100,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	32	32	31.5	32	547,500
Philippine National Bank	30.5	30.5	30	30	35,100
Phil. Savings Bank	33	33	33	33	200
Union Bank of the Phil.	26	26	26	26	40,700
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Filipino Fund Inc.	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	8,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	2450	2470	2450	2470	1,690
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1	1	1	1	250,000
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	13.75	14	13.5	14	30,300
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	1.1	1.12	1.08	1.12	4,057,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	810	815	810	815	78,430
Ipeople Inc.	3.9	3.9	3.8	3.8	21,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	2	2	2	2	30,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	3.1	3.1	3	3.1	2,503,000
Transpacific Broadcast	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	20,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1405	1405	1400	1405	135,290
Philweb Corp.	0.019	0.019	0.017	0.018	23,600,000
POWER, ENERGY & OTHER UTILITIES					
Manila Electric Co. A	16	16.5	16	16.5	25,500
Manila Electric Co. B	23	23.5	22.5	23.25	745,800
Manila Water Co. Inc.	6	6	5.9	6	4,934,000
Petron Corp.	3.35	3.4	3.35	3.35	1,864,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1.04	1.04	1.04	1.04	20,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.88	1.92	1.8	1.8	171,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	7.3	7.4	7.3	7.4	402,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.52	0.52	0.52	0.52	150,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	680,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	2.8	3	2.8	3	865,000
Republic Cement Corp.	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	200,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	4	4	3.75	3.75	10,000
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8	1,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	34	34	34	34	500
Jollibee Foods Corp.	28	28	28	28	25,700
San Miguel Corp. A	57.5	58	57.5	58	85,600
San Miguel Corp. B	83.5	84.5	83.5	84	137,100
Universal Robina Corp.	12.25	12.25	12	12	20,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.28	0.29	0.28	0.29	500,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Atok-Big Wedge Co., Inc.	7	7	7	7	1,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	20,000,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.009	0.009	0.009	0.009	10,000,000
Ayala Corp.	6.8	6.9	6.8	6.9	1,470,000
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.39	0.4	0.39	0.4	60,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	4.55	4.75	4.55	4.75	4,034,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.031	0.032	0.031	0.031	3,500,000
A. Soriano Corp.	2	2.02	1.98	2	710,000
APC Group Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	1,000,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.006	80,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	35,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	13	13	13	13	1,000
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	200,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.96	0.96	0.94	0.95	1,830,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	20,000
Cadp Group Corp.	1	1	1	1	20,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.21	0.21	0.205	0.205	900,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.33	0.36	0.33	0.35	31,470,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	2.6	2.6	2.55	2.55	514,000
Fil-Hispano Holdings Corp.	8	8	8	8	135,000
F&J Prince Holdings Corp.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	10,000
F&J Prince Hldgs. B	0.62	0.62	0.62	0.62	10,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	44	44	44	44	54,600
Global Equities Inc.	0.0825	0.0825	0.0825	0.0825	800,000
House Of Investments Inc.	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	69,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	3.35	3.4	3.35	3.4	10,000
Medco Holdings	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	50,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.28	1.3	1.28	1.3	1,914,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.36	0.36	0.34	0.35	111,950,000
Philcomsat Holdings Corp.	0.72	0.72	0.72	0.72	20,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	200,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	0.95	0.95	0.94	0.94	100,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.52	0.52	0.5	0.5	400,000
Sm Investments Corp.	248	250	248	250	661,210
South China Resources Inc.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	20,000
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	3.3	3.5	3.3	3.5	51,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.205	0.205	0.2	0.2	3,250,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	26,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	1.18	1.2	1.16	1.18	11,392,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.89	0.89	0.88	0.88	220,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.52	1.52	1.5	1.5	640,000
Manila Jockey Club	3	3	3	3	14,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	900,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp (Pdr)	13.75	13.75	13.75	13.75	114,300
PLDT (10% Pref) Series O	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	2,400
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Q	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series R	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	2,100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series S	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	2,300
PLDT (10% Pref.) Series U	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	2,200
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,400
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	3,800
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Y	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	2,300
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	3,200
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	12,200
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	7.7	7.8	7.7	7.7	4,858,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.88	0.89	0.88	0.89	150,000
C&P Homes Inc.	0.27	0.27	0.26	0.26	2,800,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.22	0.23	0.22	0.23	1,340,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.37	0.37	0.36	0.37	8,790,000
Edsa Prop. Holdings Inc.	1.14	1.14	1.14	1.14	10,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.42	1.42	1.38	1.38	6,176,000
Highlands Prime Inc.	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.21	0.21	0.2	0.2	440,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.61	0.61	0.61	0.61	760,000
Philippine Estates Corp.	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	50,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	4.65	4.8	4.65	4.8	74,000
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	150,000
SM Development Corp.	1.62	1.7	1.62	1.68	248,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	7.2	7.3	7.2	7.2	53,154,000
MINING					
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0085	0.0085	0.0075	0.0075	94,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	4.8	4.8	4.8	4.8	23,000
Benguet Corp. A	8.8	9.6	8.8	9.6	237,000
Benguet Corp. B	36	41	36	41	20,200
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	3	3.75	3	3.75	58,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	50,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.35	0.35	0.33	0.33	6,150,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.016	0.016	0.015	0.016	187,000,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.021	0.021	0.021	0.021	100,600,000
Omico Corp.	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	20,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.92	0.92	0.9	0.9	1,150,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	1.04	1.04	1.02	1.02	2,503,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	33	33	32	32.5	131,400
OIL					
Interport Res.	0.0034	0.0034	0.0034	0.0034	10,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.006	5,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.007	0.007	0.006	0.006	6,000,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.165	0.17	0.16	0.17	11,450,000

DISCLOSURES

ALSONS Consolidated Resources Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on May 24, 2:30 p.m. at New World Renaissance Hotel, Makati City. Stockholders of record as of April 20 are entitled to notice and vote at the meeting.

* * *

THE PHILODRILL Corp. disclosed the retirement of Augusto B. Sunico as executive vice president and treasurer, effective April 30. Francisco A. Navarro has been appointed executive vice president and Reynado E. Nazarea has been designated treasurer and vice president for administration.

* * *

MANILA Electric Co. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on June 28, 9 a.m. at the Meralco Theater Ortigas Avenue, Pasig City. The board has fixed April 11 as the record date for the determination of stockholders entitled to notice and vote at the meeting.

* * *

LIBERTY Flour Mills Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on May 25, 4 p.m. at Liberty Building, 835 A. Arnaiz Ave., Makati. Stockholders as of April 29 are entitled to notice and vote at the meeting. The company also disclosed the resignation letter of independent director David Ng. which will take effect immediately.

Compiled by Erika Sarmiento, PDI Research

CURRENCIES

May 4, 2005 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.776156	1.000000	54.1820
Japan	Yen	0.007394	0.009526	0.5161
United Kingdom	Pound	1.468876	1.892500	102.5394
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.099667	0.128411	6.9576
Switzerland	Franc	0.648256	0.835213	45.2535
Canada	Dollar	0.619933	0.798722	43.2764
Singapore	Dollar	0.473699	0.610314	33.0680
Australia	Dollar	0.600508	0.773694	41.9203
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.058825	2.652590	143.7226
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.206970	0.266660	14.4482
Brunei	Dollar	0.472259	0.608458	32.9675
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000081	0.000105	0.0057
Thailand	Baht	0.019635	0.025298	1.3707
UAE	Dirham	0.211326	0.272272	14.7522
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.288400	69.8081
Argentina	Peso	0.268102	0.345423	18.7157
Brazil	Real	0.311584	0.401445	21.7511
Denmark	Kroner	0.134339	0.173082	9.3779
India	Rupee	0.017818	0.022957	1.2439
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.204279	0.263193	14.2603
Mexico	New Peso	0.070643	0.091017	4.9315
New Zealand	Dollar	0.563085	0.725479	39.3079
South Africa	Rand	0.127343	0.164069	8.8896
Korea	Won	0.000775	0.000998	0.0541
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.024829	0.031990	1.7333

GMA urged to use proposed authority to raise VAT to 12%

By Michelle v. Remo

THE DEPARTMENT of Finance wants President Macapagal-Arroyo to exercise the proposed authority to raise the value-added tax rate to 12 percent if the national government's budget deficit exceeds 3 percent of the gross domestic product this year.

The government's budget deficit—a result of higher expenditures and lower revenues—was originally expected to hit P180 billion, or 3.4 percent of the GDP, this year. But the figure may go down once the bicameral conference committee of Congress passes the VAT bill.

The Senate and the House had submitted two widely different versions of the bill. The House has agreed with the executive's proposal to lift the VAT exemptions and raise the VAT rate from 10 to 12 percent. But the Senate wants the rate retained at 10 percent and simply lift more VAT exemptions.

The deadlock between the two chambers of Congress gave rise to the proposal to give the President a standby authority, which she could use to raise the VAT rate if a certain fiscal standard was not met. Congress, however, still has to arrive at a consensus on whether the president should be given such authority.

Finance Assistant Secretary Gil Beltran said using the 3-percent deficit-to-GDP ratio as the threshold level in deciding whether to use the standby authority would be practical. He stressed that the VAT bill was intended to help government achieve a fiscal standing better than originally expected.

IC to stop unauthorized cash deals involving CAP, PPI

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE INSURANCE Commission, which has placed the insurance affiliates and subsidiaries of College Assurance Plan Philippines Inc. and Pacific Plans Inc. under its watchlist, will bar unauthorized cash transfers involving the ailing pre-need companies.

Ben Santos, IC commissioner, yesterday said that the commission found no evidence that such unauthorized transfers were happening, but it was taking precautionary measures to prevent these.

"We're just performing our function as a regulator, to make sure that those things don't happen," Santos said at the sidelines of an inter-agency Financial Sector Forum meeting.

Among those in the IC's watchlist are CAP Life Insurance, CAP General Insurance, GrepaLife and Malayan Insurance.

CAPLife and CAPGen are affiliates of CAP, the pioneer firm and once the country's largest pre-need company. GrepaLife and Malayan Insurance are part of the Yuchengco Group of Companies, which spun off the good assets of Pacific Plans Inc. to a new unit before PPI applied for corporate rehabilitation.

"We're talking to cap insurance now and there would be no unauthorized cash movements from CAP Life to its pre-need unit," Santos said.

Asked how the IC would be able to track the cash movements and detect possible unauthorized transfers, Santos said: "We have access to the accounting records of CAP Life and CAP Gen, and they send reports to us."

He said the monitoring could be done on a day-to-day basis, to preempt the possible siphoning of funds to bail out the ailing pre-need affiliates or parent companies.

The IC reviews the finances of insurance companies once a year, and require those with problems to submit financial records and other documents.

Some pre-need companies are now having financial troubles. In the case of firms offering education plans, their problems started when the government removed the cap on tuition, allowing schools to raise their fees at will.

Pacific Plans Inc. earlier filed for suspension of payments, creating panic among plan holders. But it separated its viable plans and put it in another company, called Lifetime Plans, also a member of the Yuchengco Group of Companies.

CAP, on the other hand, has run into bad investments in real estate.

Gov't rejects bid for 2-year T-bonds

THE GOVERNMENT yesterday rejected all bids for the two-year Treasury bonds, as banks sought risk premiums that the Bureau of Treasury believed were unreasonably high.

Had the Treasury's auction committee accepted the bids, the rate for the two-year T-bond could have gone up to 9.25 percent, or 37.5 basis points higher than the 8.875 percent recorded during the debt instrument's previous auction in February.

National Treasurer Omar Cruz said the Treasury refused to consider the average interest rate the banks were asking, saying that the market was still awash with cash. He cited the P4.5 billion worth of Treasury bills and the over P30 billion worth of retail treasury bonds that will mature this week.

"We have the right to reject," Cruz said in a briefing after yesterday's auction. "In a highly liquid market, [the average interest rate sought by the banks] doesn't make sense."

The liquidity of the market was also apparent with the high volume of bids submitted for the two-year T-bond. Tenders reached P9.743 billion compared with the government's debt offering of only P4.5 billion.

The high volume of bids meant that the government securities market, composed mostly of banks, had appetite for the two-year debt instruments. However, they were only willing to buy the T-bonds at a high price.

The market's behavior during yesterday's auction was a stark contrast to what it showed during the auction for the short-term Treasury bills last Tuesday. T-bill rates dropped across all maturities last Tuesday, with the benchmark 91-day T-bill rate declining by 23.2 basis points to 6.319 percent.

Cruz said that the reason for the market's behavior toward the two-year T-bond yesterday was the anticipation for today's auction of Napocor (National Power Corp.) bonds.

Napocor will issue P5 billion worth of bonds, P3 billion of which will have a maturity of five years, while the remaining P2 billion will have a maturity of seven years. *Michelle V. Remo*

'05 income may hit ₱2B, Maynilad tells creditors

By Christine A. Gaylican

MAYNILAD Water Services Inc. (MWSI), the concessionaire servicing the west zone of Metro Manila, expects to earn around P2 billion by year-end, reversing the losses it posted over the last seven years.

Fiorello Estuar, Maynilad president, announced the expected earnings when he submitted before a regional trial court the company's rehabilitation plan.

Estuar also pointed out to creditors that Maynilad's cash flows would remain positive, estimating it to be no less than P5 billion in 2005.

Estuar said the company would reverse its losses and earn a decent income because of the tariff increase and service improvement.

He said the critics were wrong when they said that the company was heavily dependent on rate increases. He said Maynilad recorded a P215 million net income in February due to tariff rate adjustments implemented in January.

Estuar said this would be the first time Maynilad posted positive income since the government turned over the west concession of the water utility to the private sector in August 1997.

Maynilad is "slowly but surely" driving down its non-revenue water (NRW), now at 68.1 percent from the 69.5 percent recorded last year, Estuar said. NRW is the measurement of water lost due to leaks and pilferages.

He noted that close to half of Maynilad's P1.4-billion capital expenditure would be used to address its NRW.

"We could not derive water from new sources ... what we could do now is to curb our non-revenue water," he noted. "We will implement a water loss recovery program. Our 3R (recover, reallocate and resell) project approach will be done through pipe replacement and leak repairs."

Taking over from Rafael Alunan III in February, Estuar formerly served as Public Works and Highways Secretary during the Aquino administration.

The financially ailing Maynilad, whose debts have amounted to P18 billion is now under rehabilitation and restructuring. The designated receiver has filed the company's final version of the rehabilitation plan which had already been submitted to the Quezon City Regional Trial Court Branch 90.

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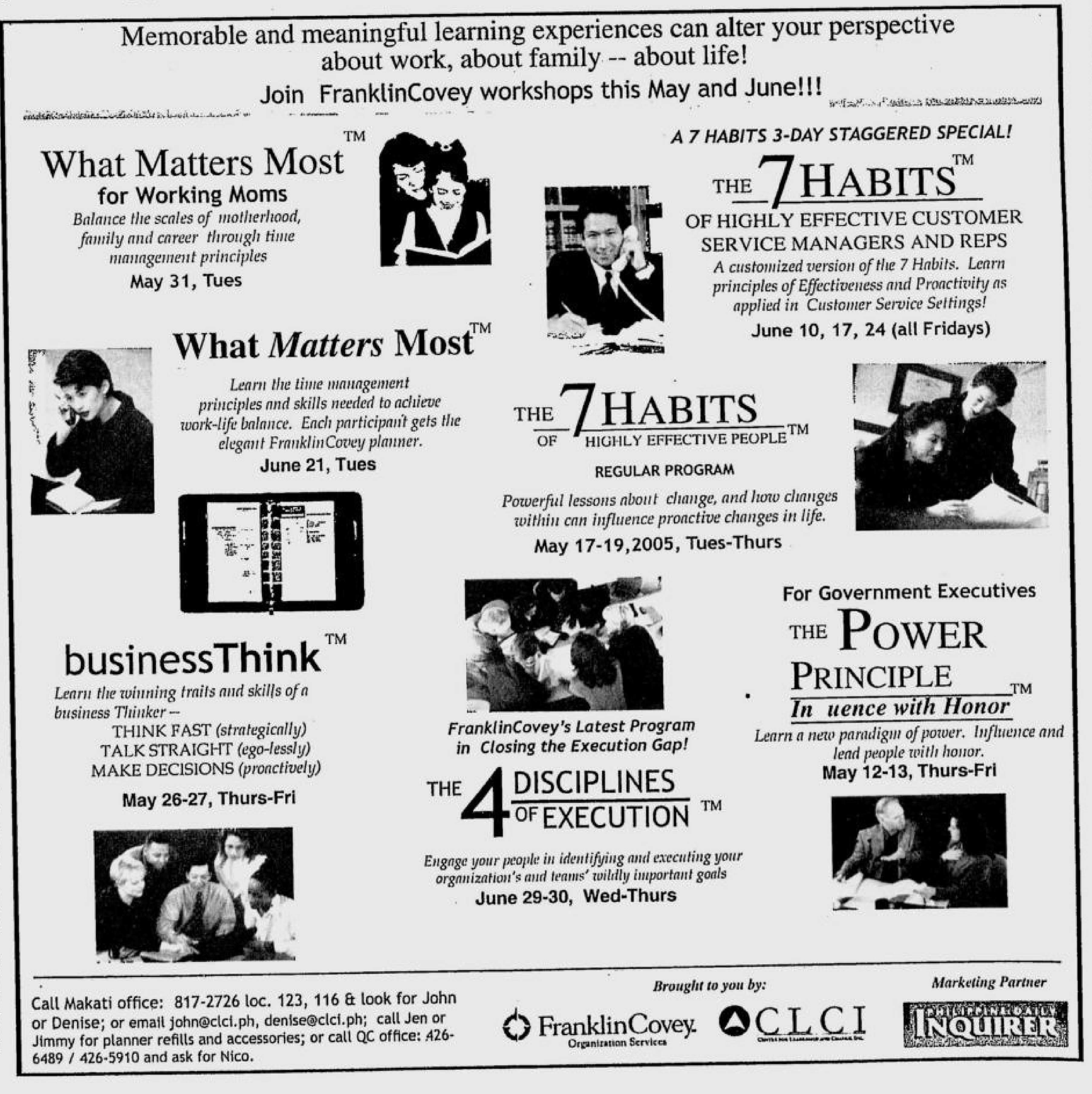

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Editor Aries Espinosa

Globe, SingTel launch prepaid SIM for OFWs in Singapore

SINGAPORE Telecommunications Inc (SingTel), recognized as Asia's leading telecommunications group and Singapore's No. 1 telecom provider, now works hand in hand with Globe Telecom Inc, the Philippines' fastest growing cellular network, in providing the new Kababayan SIM Card. This new partnership between the two telco giants opens a new and exciting chapter in cross-border mobile phone services.

"Globe which is a strategic partnership between Singtel and the Ayala Group is very pleased to serve the Filipinos in Singapore and connect them to family and friends back home. The affinity between the two countries is reflected in the intimate understanding of the Filipino customers' needs as manifested in the Singtel's Kababayan Sim. Singtel is in the best position to understand the Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) in Singapore given its access to insights both on its own and through Globe's acknowledged deep understanding of the OFWs." expressed Ferdinand dela Cruz, head of Globe Telecom's Wireless Consumer Business Group.

Initiated through Globe Kababayan, Globe's service arm for the OFWs and their families, the new Kababayan SIM is the only such service designed for Filipinos in Singapore. "Globe's approach through the Kababayan Partnership Program with SingTel offers us the ability to address the Filipino market in Singapore in a way which leverages the strengths of both partners. The approach will enable us to adapt quickly to the changing needs of the customers without significant infrastructure and resource investments in each country," Andrew Buay, chief operating adviser of Globe Telecom said.

Made especially for Filipinos in Singapore, the SingTel Kababayan SIM gives the lowest and most affordable rates to Filipinos in the Lion City for all calls and texts made to Globe Handyphone and Touch Mobile phone users here in the Philippines.

Singapore Telco providers typically charge Sing$40 cents/min for IDD calls but with the Kababayan SIM Card, Filipino subscribers in Singapore only need to shell out Sing$30 cents/min. Even international texting rates are lower for the Kababayan SIM pegged at only Sing$5 cents/text as compared to the regular Sing$15 cents/text charged by other Singapore telco providers.

The Kababayan SIMs are now available in Lucky Plaza Mall along Orchard Road - touted as the convergence point of Filipinos in Singapore -- and in all SingTel hello! stores.

Globe Kababayan, the service arm of Globe Telecom for the Filipinos overseas and their families in the Philippines -- has started to make its presence felt in various countries worldwide since the middle of the year 2004 with the introduction of cross-border services including International Autoload-MAX, International Share A Load, Globe G-Cash International Remittance via Text and Quick Remit and Load cards in the Asian, European and North American markets.

ANDREW Buay, chief operating adviser of Globe Telecom.

FERDINAND dela Cruz, head of Globe Telecom's Wireless Consumer Business Group.

SPANISH PUBLISHER RECEIVES KEY TO THE CITY OF MANILA
Señor Javier Moll (4th from left), president of Editorial Prensa Iberica (one of the largest newspaper publishers in Spain), receives the key to the City of Manila from Mayor Lito Atienza, witnessed by (from left) former Elan editor Conchitina Bernardo, Philippine Ambassador to Spain Lani Bernardo, Arantza Moll and Carmen Hernandez. The Spanish publisher is looking for attractive investments in the country.

Free medical transcription career orientation seminar by MTC Academy

MTC Academy, the country's first and largest Tesda-certified medical transcription (MT) training institution is currently holding free career orientation seminars on medical transcription in all its branches nationwide as part of its medical transcription awareness program. Topics to be discussed in this seminar include the medical transcription industry in general, what it is like to be a medical transcriptionist, job descriptions, work schedules (an MT can work full time, part time and may even work at home), tools/equipment and software needed, and income opportunities.

As an industry, medical transcription offers an incredible potential estimated at $10 to $20 billion and is still growing at annual rate of 13 percent. The availability of medical transcriptionists is decreasing at 10 percent per annum. They are very much in demand in the US, UK, Canada, Australia, Middle East and in the Philippines. Globally, 49,000 to 150,000 additional MTs are needed per year. Medical transcription has become a priority area in the information and communication technology (ICT) development in the Philippines as it is a dollar-earning industry.

Medical transcription means converting into written form the dictation by the physician and other healthcare professionals regarding patient assessment, work-up, therapeutic procedures, clinical course, diagnosis in order to document patient care and facilitate healthcare services. An MT is known as a medical language specialist who transcribes the recorded medical audio file into electronic data.

As far as income is concerned, local MTs may earn an estimated P10,000 to P75,000 per month and foreign MTs may earn US$39,000 per annum - depending on the MT being office-based, home-based, part-time or full-time. Furthermore, MTs do not need a US Visa to accept US based medical transcription work. This translates to vast opportunities to local and foreign-based MTs alike.

MTC Academy, recognized as the Most Outstanding Medical Transcription School by the Parangal ng Bayan Foundation for the 20th Annual National Consumers Excellence Awards, offers the following courses: Basic Medical Transcription for High School Graduates, Intermediate Medical Transcription for Non-Medical Course Graduates, Intermediate Medical Transcription for Allied Health Course Graduates and Advanced Medical Transcription for Medical Course Graduates. This summer, MTC Academy offers MT Hypertrack, a very comprehensive 2-month MT training program especially designed for medical and allied health course graduates who would want to complete their medical transcription training immediately.

For details, contact their branches at Cavite City (046) 431-2271, 431-4724; Buendia, Makati City 890-7319/72; East Avenue, QC 924-9258, 436-7571/72; DCTI-MTC Diliman, QC 9311089, 9324714; Alabang, Muntinlupa City 772-2822/23; Caloocan City 362-9678/88; Sucat (Evacom) Paranaque City 829-0868, 829-4331 , Batangas City (043) 722-2623, 980-6985; Dasmariñas, Cavite (046) 416-6023/24. More information can be obtained at www.mtcacademy.com and email inquiries can also be sent at admin@mtcacademy.com.

KAHIT KAILAN
JOEY
CONGRESS

ARAULLO HS '71 MEDICAL MISSION
Congressman Joey Hizon, together with Araullo High School batch '71, sponsored a medical mission on March 19 at Arellano Avenue corner A. Francisco Street.

Charmee
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CHARMEE WINS AWARD
The Parangal ng Bayan Foundation Inc presented the National Consumers Excellence Awards to Charmee as the Outstanding Brand of Feminine Pads in recognition of their significant contribution in shaping the Philippine Economy and in the enrichment and upliftment of the lives of the Filipino people. The Parangal ng Bayan Foundation Inc is the country's biggest organization which gives due recognition to outstanding Filipinos and world-class achievers from various fields of endeavor and excellent manufacturers, products and services that contribute to the economic progress of the Philippines. Photo shows (from left) Rica Renee Reyes, assistant brand manager, JS Unitrade Merchandise Inc and Sis Vickie Dizon, overall chair, Parangal ng Bayan Foundation Inc. Charmee Feminine protection is exclusively distributed by JS Unitrade Merchandise Inc.

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NIPPON LIFE LAUNCHES WHALE
As Nippon Life launches its brand new product Whale, which stands for Whole life with Anticipated Lifetime Endowments, Nippon Life Phils president and CEO Yoshinobu Kimura says the company hopes to capture a bigger share of the high-end market with this new offering while maintaining its commitment to develop products that are attuned to the needs of the high-end Filipino consumer. Portraying its highly optimistic mood, Nippon Life has even designed a brand new logo - a huge smiling scarlet whale with the inscriptions beneath it that says 'Whale, Enhancing Life!'.

Bits & Clips

Jazz dance concert

THE INTERNATIONALLY renowned Masashi Action Machine of the Jazz Dance World Congress is coming to town. Entitled "Samurai", this jazz dance concert features a unique blending of western jazz with distinctly Japanese icons. Performances will be at the Meralco Theater on May 7 and 8. Tickets available at all Ticketnet outlets, call 911-5555. The event is for the benefit of the handicapped children under the care of The Daughters of St. Mary of Providence in BF Homes, QC.

Titser's Enemi #1: Pepe Smith, Wally Gonzales Band

RELIVE Pinoy Rock and Roll at its best with Titser's Enemy #1: Pepe Smith and Wally Gonzales Band. This special treat for Filipino rakistas is set on May 6, 9:30 p.m. at Party Central, Mother Ignacia, Quezon City. Pinoy Rock geniuses Pepe Smith and Wally Gonzales of the Juan dela Cruz Band gives us rock as real as it gets as they once again break walls with "Rak en Rol sa Ulan", "Beep beep", "Balong Malalim", "Himig Natin", "Titser's Enemi #1" among others. This event is brought by Party Central, PCSO, Pagcor, Yes FM and NU 107. Call Party Central at 426-6212 for further inquiries.

Summer English programs at the Ateneo

THE ATENEO Language Learning Center (ALLC) in the Loyola campus is offering a special package of English language courses for different purposes. Intended for the non-academic, academic and professional communities, the programs are keyed to specific English language needs and demands ranging from grammar review, reading and writing skills development, English language communication for front liners, effective oral presentation skills to writing in the professions. Called the ALLC Summer Program for English Enhancement or Aspee, it has lined up programs that are designed to meet the needs of diverse groups. Aspee will be handled by Ateneo teachers from the faculty pool of the Ateneo Language Learning Center. To assure closer interaction between facilitators and participants, each course class sizes are limited. Aspee runs from May 2 to 28 in the Ateneo university campus. The ALLC offices in Alingal Hall of the Ateneo de Manila University will answer any inquiries about the Aspee. Or these may be coursed over the phone on 426-5662/426-6001 local 4042.

TEENS SIGN-UP FOR TERIYAKI BOY'S JUNIOR SUMMER CREW
Teriyaki Boy launched a new program called 'Junior Summer Crew' wherein teenagers get a chance to work at selected Teriyaki boy restaurants. This program is open to students ages 13 to 18 years, Filipino Citizen, enthusiastic and highly motivated. The Junior Summer Crew was made for teenagers who want to make the most out of their summer. Although there were throngs of teens who signed up for the interview only a selected 20 can be admitted per branch. The crew is then required to work for three (3) hours per day at 3 days per week. They will go through a formal orientation to learn their duties and work objectives. They will have a peek on how Teriyaki Boy undergoes its daily operations, a chance to interact with diners, and win new friends. They also get free meals and allowance during this program.

Dusit Hotel Nikko

PRESS FORUM ON MESOTHERAPY
Dermclinic, one of the country's leading proponents in dermatology for over 30 years, recently held a press forum on Mesotherapy at Dusit Hotel, Makati. Mesotherapy is a breakthrough medical procedure that involves injection of microscopic quantities of natural plant extracts, pharmaceutical medications, and vitamins into the middle layer of the skin called mesoderm. It is non-surgical, relatively painless technique, safe and effective alternative for melting unwanted fat deposits, cellulite reduction, body contouring, face and neck rejuvenation among others. Dermclinic, opened 22 branches offering skin care products and professional dermatological services. Photo shows Dr. Vinson B. Pineda, president and CEO of Dermclinic Inc during the forum.

ProductFILES

Fun and play with new Star Pops

STAR POPS
FRUITS
CHOCO

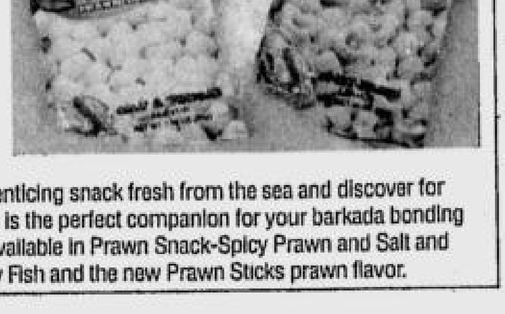
THE STAR Pops family is made up of fun and enjoyable lollipop treats that kids just love. These yummy delights are available in Fruits and Choco variants. Star Pops Fruits are tangy and fruity lollies made with your favorite fruit flavors. And for a yummy and choco-licious treat, go for Star Pops Choco. These lollipops are an enjoyable blend of chocolate and rich flavors. Star Pops are the perfect treat for creative and adventurous kids who are in search of an equally exciting and playful companion. Made by Universal Robina Corp, it's available in a number of yummy-licious flavors.

Three diabetic aids in Moreishi Herbalin Plus

Moreishi
G
Defense

MOREISHI Herbalin Plus herbal supplement is formulated to help diabetics control their blood sugar levels. It contains three natural wonder herbs to combat spiking insulin levels: Ampalaya has been shown to increase production of beta cells by the pancreas, thereby improving the body's ability to produce insulin; Banaba is a natural plant insulin and it contains corosolic acid widely used in many diabetes treatments; Ginseng aside from being a well-known aphrodisiac is also a powerful antioxidant and an adaptogen, which helps supply the body's needs. Moreishi products are distributed by the Empower Group and are registered with the BFAD. For more information about Empower membership and their range of products, call (02)534-6843 or 532-8059.

Jack 'n Jill's prized catch this season



THERE'S an exciting new treat that's perfect for all beach-bound barkadas - Jack 'n Jill Sea Crunch Prawn Sticks. This fresh new offering from the Sea Crunch family is bursting with real prawn flavor. Made only with the highest quality ingredients, Jack 'n Jill Sea Crunch is a real prized catch. Take a bite of this enticing snack fresh from the sea and discover for yourself why Sea Crunch is the perfect companion for your barkada bonding sessions this summer. Available in Prawn Snack-Spicy Prawn and Salt and Vinegar, Sweet and Spicy Fish and the new Prawn Sticks prawn flavor.

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INVITATION TO BID

Sealed proposals will be received by the Board of Overseers not later than 3:00 p.m. on May 15, 2005 at the University Hotel, UP Diliman, QC for the lease of business spaces: Rm 1=25.21 sq.m., RM 2=29.43sq.m., Rm 3=47.60 sq.m. For more details, please contact Mr. Eduardo G. Sabat, Telefax: 926-4919.

(PDI - May 5, 2005)

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INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Land Bank of the Philippines invites interested suppliers who are (a) duly licensed Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships; or (b) 60% Filipino owned partnerships/corporations; or (c) two or more suppliers forming into joint ventures jointly and severally liable; or (d) cooperatives duly registered with the CDA; with largest single contract, similar to the items for bid, for the last 2 years, at least equal to 50% of the approved budget; and with Net Financial Contracting Capacity (NFCC) at least equal to the approved budget, to apply for eligibility and to bid for the following items:

ITB No.	Item / Description	Approved Budget	Source of Funds
2005-107	244 units Document Scanner	P 25,056,360.00	LBP Funds
2005-122	100 units Automated Teller Machines (ATMs)	71,184,300.00	LBP Funds
	Plus: Four (4)-Year Maintenance Package (inclusive of cost on labor, parts and incidental charges for travel, lodging, repair and quarterly preventive Software/Hardware Maintenance) - Renewable every year	12,996,156.40	LBP Funds
2005-126	566 pcs. 14K Gold Ring for 15 Years Service Awardees	3,300,850.00	LBP Funds

Bidding of the above requirements is scheduled on **June 8, 2005 at 1:00 p.m.** and the Bid Documents may be obtained from the Procurement Division of the General Services Department, 25th Floor, LANDBANK Plaza, M. H. del Pilar corner Dr. Quintos Streets, Malate, Manila, **upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P3,000.00, P10,000.00 and P1,000.00 for ITB Nos. 2005-107, 2005-122 and 2005-126, respectively.**

Interested suppliers are requested to attend the Pre-Bid Conference scheduled on **May 19 and 20, 2005** at the 25th Floor, Conference Room, LANDBANK Plaza, Malate, Manila.

All particulars relative to the **Qualification/Eligibility, Bid Bond, Performance Bond, Pre-bid Conference, Bid Evaluation and Award of Contract** shall be governed by the provisions of **RA 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations.**

Only those bidders who comply with the Bank's requirements shall be eligible to participate in the bidding.

LANDBANK reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to declare the bidding a failure or waive any defect or informality and to accept bids as may be considered most advantageous to the Bank.

COMMITTEE ON BIDS AND AWARDS

(PDI–May 5 & 12, 2005)

LAND BANK OF THE PHILIPPINES

Ang Bangkong May Damdaming-Bayan
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INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Land Bank of the Philippines invites interested suppliers who are (a) duly licensed Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships; or (b) 60% Filipino owned partnerships/corporations; or (c) two or more suppliers forming into joint ventures jointly and severally liable; or (d) cooperatives duly registered with the CDA; with largest single contract, similar to the items for bid, for the last 2 years, at least equal to 50% of the approved budget; and with Net Financial Contracting Capacity (NFCC) at least equal to the approved budget, to apply for eligibility and to bid for the following items:

ITB No.	Item / Description	Approved Budget	Source of Funds
2005-116	30 units Bill Counter, Portable Type	P 890,400.00	LBP Funds
	6 units Bill Counter, Console Type	639,180.00	LBP Funds
	7 units Calculator, Electronic, Desktop	21,900.00	LBP Funds
	33 units Pocket Calculator, 14 digits	11,880.00	LBP Funds
	6 units Coin Counter	413,400.00	LBP Funds
	4 units Facsimile Machine	24,800.00	LBP Funds
	7 units Manual Typewriter	95,800.00	LBP Funds

Bidding of the above requirements is scheduled on **May 25, 2005 at 1:00 p.m.** and the Bid Documents may be obtained from the Procurement Division of the General Services Department, 25th Floor, LANDBANK Plaza, M. H. del Pilar corner Dr. Quintos Streets, Malate, Manila, **upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P1,000.00.**

Interested suppliers are requested to attend the Pre-Bid Conference scheduled on **May 13, 2005** at the 25th Floor, Conference Room, LANDBANK Plaza, Malate, Manila.

All particulars relative to the **Qualification/Eligibility, Bid Bond, Performance Bond, Pre-bid Conference, Bid Evaluation and Award of Contract** shall be governed by the provisions of **RA 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations.**

Only those bidders who comply with the Bank's requirements shall be eligible to participate in the bidding.

LANDBANK reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to declare the bidding a failure or waive any defect or informality and to accept bids as may be considered most advantageous to the Bank.

COMMITTEE ON BIDS AND AWARDS

(PDI–April 28 & May 5, 2005)

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EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

MALE/FEMALE

OFFICE STAFF [illegible] ALTHEA

SALES REP Salary & Commission 0917-8398865 & 915-1390 to 96

PUBLIC NOTICES

ANNOUNCEMENT

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT STOCK CERT. NO. 0031 ISSUED BY BATULAO GOLF & MOUNTAIN RESORT, INC. FOR ONE (1) SHARE OF ITOCHU CORPORATION HAS BEEN DECLARED LOST. IF NO CONTEST IS RECEIVED NEW CERTIFICATE WILL BE ISSUED.(PDI APR. 28, MAY 5, 12, 2005)

AUCTION SALE

MARA PAWNSHOP BR of 2230 M. Roxas St Sta Ana Manila Auction Sale on May. 12. 2005. Thurs.at 2:30 in the afternoon. Respectively, Dec. 15 - Jan. 12,2005 SONS of J. LANUZA, Auctioneer. (PDI May 5, 2005)

PUBLIC NOTICES

AUCTION SALE

MARA PAWNSHOP I, II, III, IV and Comembo Br. of Makati City. AUCTION SALE on May12, 2005 Thurs. at 10:30, 11:00, 12:30, 1:30 in the morning and on the afternoon, respectively, Dec.15-Jan.12, 2005 SONS OF J. LANUZA, Auctioneer.
(PDI May 5, 2005)

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is herby given that the estate of Domingo Yambao was extrajudicially settled among his heirs per Doc. No. 22, Page No. 5, Book No. 189, Series of 2005 before Notary Public Atty. Ramiro Osorio of Quezon City.
(PDI-May 5, 12 & 19, 2005)

NOTICE is hereby given that the estate of the DECEASED FRANCISCO ORTEGA, JR., who died intestate on FEB. 22, 2000, and the deceased ZOE B. ORTEGO, who died also intestate on JAN. 19, 2005, was adjudicated by their only heir KATHERINE B. ORTEGO by virtue of an affidavit of self-adjudication executed and acknowledged before ATTY. PABLO S. CASTILLO, Notary Public, and entered in his notarial record as Doc. No. 006, Page No. 002, Book No. I, Series of 2005
(PDI - APR. 21, 28 & MAY 5, 2005)

PUBLIC NOTICES

ANNOUNCEMENT

Notice is hereby given to MR. ALBINO D. RODRIGUEZ of Block 6 Lot 5, Bonanza Phase IV, a member beneficiary of Bonanza Phase IV Dwellers Association (BPDA) of Parang, Marikina City who abandoned his obligation to the association and to the NHMFC to report immediately to BPDA.

Mr Jaime C. Manlangit
President – Bonanza Phase IV Dwellers Assn

(PDI - May 5 & 12, 2005)

LEGAL NOTICE

TO THE GEN. PUBLIC REG. OF DEEDS OF LA UNION PR.

NOTICE: Transfer Cert. of Title Nos. T-4083 & T-4084 of land in Paratong Bacnotan La Union have not been recieved by reg. owner. No transaction is allowed. Pls. relay info to S. P. Rivera Law Office Suite 9007 Crowne 88 Cond. Panay Ave., Diliman Quezon City

POEA
24-HR
HOTLINES
722-1144
722-1155

INTERNATIONAL MARKETING ALLIANCE PACIFIC CORPORATION

A foreign company engaged in the business of Marketing Business Services of Foreign Companies through telecommunications is in urgent need of:

TELESALES REPRESENTATIVES

BASIC SALARY + +

Basic Responsibilities:

☐ General Marketing through telecommunications to prospective clients.

Qualifications:

☐ Male or Female 20-45 years old, work experience in Inbound or Outbound call centers and or customer service is an advantage. Must be confident, self-motivated and fluent in spoken English, must have excellent interpersonal skills and reasoning ability.

Initial interview shall be conducted on the phone, for initial screening please call.

0915-447-4567 Between 2 p.m. & 7 p.m. Mon-Fri

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Land Reform
Foreign Assisted Projects Office
Agrarian Reform Infrastructure Support Project II
CENTRAL PROJECT OFFICE

DAR

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Government of the Philippines, through the Department of Land Reform (DLR), has received an ODA loan from Japan Bank for International Cooperation, herein referred to as JBIC, towards the cost of Agrarian Reform Infrastructure Support Project Phase II (ARISP II), and intends to apply a portion of the proceeds of the loan in the total amount of Twenty Three Million Two Hundred Twenty Five Thousand and 0/100 Pesos (P23,225,000.00) to payments under contract of procurement of equipment.

The DAR Foreign-Assisted Projects Office (FAPsO), Pre-qualifications, Bids and Awards Committee (PBAC) is inviting contractors to pre-qualify and bid for the following equipment:

152 sets of desktop computers;
27 units of Laptop computers; and
76 units LCD

JBIC requires that bidders and contractors, as well as the Government of the Philippines-Department of Land Reform, under contracts funded with JBIC ODA loan and other Japanese ODA, observe the highest standard of ethics during the procurement and execution of such contract. In pursuance of this policy, JBIC:

1. will reject a proposal for award if it determines that the bidder recommended for award has engaged in corrupt and fraudulent practices in competing for the contract in question;
2. will recognize a contractor as ineligible, for a period determined by JBIC, to be awarded a contract funded with JBIC ODA if it any time determines that the contractor has engaged in corrupt or fraudulent practices in competing for, or in executing, another contract funded with JBIC ODA loan or other Japanese ODA.

Interested eligible parties are invited to apply for eligibility and to submit sealed bids using Two Envelope System.

- List of eligibility requirements shall be available for issuance on 09 May 2005;
- Closing date and time for submission of eligibility requirements shall be on 23 May 2005; 12 00 P.M., Manila Time to the DLR-FAPsO Administrative Unit, 2nd Floor, FAPsO Building, Department of Land Reform, Elliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City. Pre-qual Assessment, Evaluation & Inspection of sites, 1:30 P.M. onwards, Manila;
- Letter of Notice to Eligible Bidders shall be issued on 30 May 2005;
- Bid documents shall be issued to Eligible Bidders on June 06-10 2005, upon presentation of valid Notification Letter and payment of non-refundable fee of Two Thousand Pesos (P2,000 00);
- Closing date and time of submission of bids is 27 June 2005 at 9:00 A M. Bids will be opened in the presence of participating bidders on the same day at 9:30 A.M., FAPsO Conference Room, 4th Floor, FAPsO Building, DLR Compound.

All documents pertaining to the tender are available at DLR-FAPsO, Administrative Unit, 2nd Floor, FAPsO Building, Department of Land Reform, Elliptical Road, Diliman, Quezon City with Tel. No. 928-62-68 and Fax No. 454-1983.

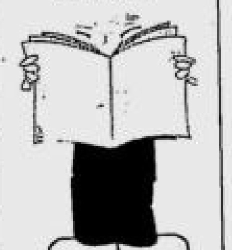
The above types of equipment is considered as one lot. The DLR will not entertain bidders bidding for only one or two types of equipment.

The DLR reserves the right to reject any, or accept the offer most advantageous to the Government, and annul the bidding process and reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without hereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

(Sgd.) GERUNDIO "KHALIQ" C. MADUEÑO
Undersecretary

(PDI - April 27 & May 5, 2005)

WHERE YOU FIND THE BEST.



JOB Market
Read it every Sunday with the Philippine Daily Inquirer and visit it online at www.jobmarketonline.com

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BOARD OF INVESTMENTS

dti

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the application of PAMORA FARM, INC. with office address at Km. 396 Garreta, Pidigan, Abra for registration with the Board of Investments under Book I of the Omnibus Investments Code of 1987, otherwise known as E.O. 226, as Amended, as a New Operator of Tourist Accommodation Facility (Agricultural Tourism Project) with a capacity of 13 Rooms with project site at same office address stated above as been officially accepted on May 3, 2005 and is currently being processed.

Any person with valid objections to or pertinent comments on the above-mentioned application may file his/her objection, in writing under oath, with the BOI within one (1) week from the date of this publication.

Issued this 3rd day of April 2005.

(Sgd.) RUDY B. CANA
Officer-in-Charge
Project Evaluation and
Registration Department

(PDI - May 5, 2005)

Group art show slate

A GROUP art show of 10 emerging artists from the University of the Philippines-Diliman College of Fine Arts, the exhibit tackles issues on existence, identity or history through self-parody, self-criticism, self-validation, self-patronage, self-assessment, self-mythologization, or self-question.

The works address the formalistic and the intrinsic qualities of art: Dahlia Lara Barcelona's further explorations of canvas as a material and its polarity of planar and volumetric qualities; Lyle Buencamino's fondness of doodles through comic characters illustrations; Patrick de Veyra's dialogue between iconographic childhood memories and his current stylistic approaches in painting through a collage and layering of painted images; Samantha Gungon's commentary on the aspect of corporeal beauty through photographs; Carl Christopher Loquias' fascination with the conglomeration of heterogeneous materials to bridge his old and present environs through relief works; Mervin Morris Malonzo's deftness in drawing portrayed through his accumulated self-images; Renan Ortiz' thought-provoking ideas on the concept of anatomy-autonomy-metonymy as a medical-art parody through an installation piece; Jaco Payawal's interplay of images as a flashback of memories to create puzzle of personal visual history through paintings; Lenie Pangilinan's fusion of interior-industrial-graphic-fashion ideas through the use of metal and textile in the compositions to evoke childhood experience; Hannah Pettyjohn's installations from retrievals of shards of broken clay figurines.

An experiential act by Neil Pagulayan and Meila Romero allowing the assumption of authority by presenting, through the use of the human body and music, diverse probable circumstances culled from the past and invented experiences, will commence the opening night.

A vestige of a collective consciousness curated by Marco Ruben T. Malto II,Tracings opens on May 5 at the Cultural Center of the Philippines' Pasilyo V. Manansala and G. Tolentino at 6:00 p.m., and will run until June 12.

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Quezon City

ANNOUNCEMENT OF BIDDING

In consonance with Republic Act 9184, the National Food Authority (NFA) wishes to announce that it will be conducting an ocean freight bidding (OFB) on May 24, 2005 at 11:00 AM at the FDC Lecture Room No. 1, FTI Complex, Taguig, Metro Manila among all Philippine Shipping Companies registered under Philippine Laws and accredited by Maritime Industry Authority (MARINA) to transport/ferry 400,000 MT, 5% more or less rice imports with an appropriated budget from NFA's corporate resources of FIVE HUNDRED EIGHTY MILLION PESOS (Php 580 M). Details, as follows:

		ARRIVAL PERIOD
A.	**300,000 MT, 5% MOL Non-Iron Fortified Rice in bags of 50 kg net of THAILAND, VIETNAM, CHINA, AUSTRALIA, PAKISTAN and/or US origin;.**	**AT LEAST 35% JUNE 2005** **AT LEAST 35% JULY 2005** **BALANCE 30% AUGUST 2005**
B.	**100,000 MT,5% MOL Iron Fortified Rice in bags of 50 kg net of THAILAND, VIETNAM, CHINA, AUSTRALIA, PAKISTAN and/or US Origin**	**AT LEAST 50% JULY 15, 2005** **BALANCE AUG. 15, 2005**

Maximum volume to be offered per vessel shall be 15,000 MT

All interested offerors are required to submit bid offers in US Dollars per gross metric ton, Free in and Out stowed and Trimmed (FIOST) basis, one loading port, one (1) to two (2) safe berths and one discharging port, one (1) to two (2) safe berths, as specified in the NFA Ocean Freight Bid Terms.

Likewise, all interested offerors are required to post a bid bond equivalent to 2.5% of the highest value of the offered freight in the form of Cashier's and/ or Manager's Check issued by a reputable bank in Metro Manila or an irrevocable stand-by L/C issued by a reputable commercial bank.

Winning bidders are required to submit a performance bond equivalent to 2.5% of the value of the awarded freight offer within three (3) banking days after receipt of the Notice of Award in the form of Cashier's and/or Manager's Check issued by a reputable bank in Metro Manila.

List of Eligibility Requirements and Instruction to Bidders may be secured thru MR. TOMAS R. ESCAREZ, Assistant Department Manager and MR. NESTOR U. PUANGCO, Division Manager, Department for Marketing Operations, 5th Flr., NFA Matimyas Bldg., 101 E. Rodriguez Sr. Ave., Quezon City, Telephone Nos. 712-1564, 743-86-96 or 712-3341 Loc. 8513 starting April 28, 2005.

The Terms of Reference (TOR) detailing the conditions of the bid and Offer Sheets will likewise be available starting April 28 up to May 17, 2005 (8:00 AM - 5:00 PM) upon payment of a Php7,500.00 non-refundable fee.

The **OFB- Pre-Bidding** conference will be held on **May 10, 2005**, at **2:00 PM** at the FDC Lecture Room, FTI Complex, Taguig, Metro Manila.

Submission of eligibility requirements, technical proposal and price offers will be between 9:00 AM to 10:55 AM at the FDC Lecture Room, FTI Complex, Taguig, Metro Manila on **May 24, 2005. Opening of bids** will start at exactly **11:00 AM.**

The National Food Authority reserves the right to reject any or all bid proposals, to waive any required formality or defect therein and may accept the bid/s which is deemed most advantageous to the Agency.

(Sgd) **JESSUP P. NAVARRO**
Deputy Administrator
and Chairman, BAC

(PDI - April 28 & May 5, 2005)

Republic of the Philippines
SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM
San Pablo City

OFFICE OF THE BAC CLUSTER

Visit the SSS website for Bid Invitations

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY & TO BID SECURITY SERVICES

The SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM, with office at M. Paulino St. corner Balagtas Blvd., San Pablo City is inviting bidders for a two (2) year contract of security services to be rendered at the following building/premises:

SSS Branches	
Laguna Province (San Pablo, Biñan, Calamba, Sta. Cruz) Batangas Province (Batangas City, Lipa City) Cavite Province (Bacoor, EPZA, Tagaytay) Quezon Province (Lucena, Infanta) MIMAROPA (Calapan, Or. Mindoro, San Jose, Occ. Mindoro, Boac, Marinduque, Odiongan, Romblon, Puerto Princesa City, Palawan)	
Total number of security guards	45
Approved Budget for Two-Year Contract	P 19,167,850.56
Source of Fund	M/R Building Security Services
Contract Duration	Two (2) years

Application for eligibility is open to all Security Agencies with at least three (3) years experience and must not have been "Blacklisted" by any government agency nor have violated any provision of the contract with past and existing clients.

SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES

PARTICULARS	DATE	VENUE
Issuance of eligibility requirements	Apr. 28 – May 12, 2005	BAC Secretariat, 2nd Flr., SSS San Pablo Bldg.
Deadline for submission of eligibility requirements	May 17, 2005	BAC Secretariat, 2nd Flr. SSS San Pablo Bldg.
Issuance of Bidding Documents to Eligible Bidders upon payment of non-refundable fee: P10,000.00	May 24, 2005	BAC Secretariat, 2nd Flr., SSS San Pablo Bldg.
Pre-bid Conference	May 26, 2005	Conference Room, 2nd Flr., SSS San Pablo Bldg.
Submission & Opening of Bids shall be announced and confirmed through a Bid Bulletin.		

For any inquiry, please call telephone numbers (049) 5625-919 or 5625-921.

This bidding shall be governed by the Implementing Rules and Regulations of Republic Act No. 9184, otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act."

The SSS reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, to waive any formality or technicality, and to award to any bidder whose proposal is deemed most advantageous to the System. The SSS neither assumes any obligation for any loss whatsoever that may be incurred by the bidders in the preparation of their respective bids, nor does the SSS guarantee that an award will be made.

(Sgd.) THE CHAIRMAN
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

(PDI – May 5, 2005)

PMAP seminars set

THE PERSONNEL Management Association of the Philippines is sponsoring a seminar on Enhancing Supervisors' Productivity scheduled on May 9-11. This three-day course aims to equip supervisors with the necessary tools and techniques to enable them to take more responsibilities for managing work in their area and improve their personal ability to lead a group in pursuit of individual and corporate effectiveness. Registration fee is P6,600 for PMAP Members and P8,100 for Non PMAP Members.

HR Executive Series on Consulting Tools: Enhancing HR's Strategic Roles is scheduled on May 12-14, which will be held at Dusit Hotel Nikko. Registration fee is P14,000 for PMAP Members and P15,000 for Non PMAP Center. The participants will come out of the 2-day workshop being able to explain the strategic role that they can play in the development and success of their organizations; diagnose organizational issues from a macro perspective and from a medium to long-range time frame; practice internal consulting skills to address critical organizational and people issues; and prepare a development plan for themselves and for the entire HR department and/or service units toward a more strategic role in their organizations.

A two-day workshop on Identifying Training Needs and Targeting the Training Outcomes scheduled on May 16-17. Registration fee is P5,600 for PMAP Members and P7,100 for Non PMAP Members. At the end of this module, participants will be able to design a training needs analysis project, including a statement of the desired training outcomes, and prepare a personal action plan for implementation.

For reservations, please contact The Human Resource Management Development Center at telephone numbers 726-1581; 726-1588 or 726-1532; email address: maylene.gatdula@pampa.org.ph or you may visit the website: www.pmap.org.ph

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NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Quezon City

ANNOUNCEMENT OF BIDDING

The National Food Authority (NFA) wishes to announce that it will be conducting a bidding on **May 24, 2005 at 10:00 a.m.** at the **FOOD DEVELOPMENT CENTER BUILDING FTI Complex, Taguig, Metro Manila**, among all interested rice suppliers for the **supply of maximum 300,000 MT, 5% MOLSO non-iron fortified long grain white rice, 25% brokens and 100,000 MT, 5% MOLSO iron fortified long grain white rice, 5%, 15% and 25% brokens in 50 kilograms net capacity polypropylene bags** with an appropriated budget of **Php5.40B** for non-iron fortified and **Php2.03B** for iron fortified rice, from corporate resources. **Source countries shall be Thailand, Vietnam, China, Pakistan, Australia and/or U.S.** Breakdown as follows:

VOLUME(MT)5%MOLSO	COMMODITY SPECIFICATION
300,000 non-iron fortified (mandatory bid)	25% brokens
100,000 iron fortified (optional bid)	5%, 15% and 25% brokens

Price offers shall be on CFR, FO and FOB basis, Documents Against Acceptance (D/A) with a tenor of ninety (90) days from receipt by NFA of the complete set of original documents for payment and on the basis of a mandatory countertrade commitment and countertrade performed on best effort. All interested suppliers are required to submit quotations for the non-iron fortified rice which is a mandatory bid Otherwise, bids will be considered non-responsive. Arrival period for both non-iron and iron fortified rice shall be as follows:

Arrival Period	Percentage of Volume to be Offered
A. NON-IRON FORTIFIED	
Not Later Than June 2005	At least 35%
Not Later Than July 2005	At least 35%
Not Later Than August 2005	Balance
B. IRON FORTIFIED	
Not Later Than 15 July 2005	At least 50%
Not Later Than 15 August 2005	Balance

Government suppliers and private suppliers who have delivered to the NFA **within the last two (2) years (2003/2004) and do not have a bad track record may be awarded the following maximum volume:**

SUPPLIER	IRON-FORTIFIED	NON-IRON FORTIFIED
government (with good track record)	max. 100,000 MT	max. 250,000 MT
private (with good track record)	max. 30,000 MT	max. 30,000 MT
government/private (without track record)	max. 15,000 MT	max. 15,000 MT

However, suppliers and/or source companies with pending import-related accounts/liability prior 2003 are considered to have bad track records and are not allowed to participate in the bid.

Minimum volume to be offered per supplier shall be 10,000 MT per specification. The vessels to be utilized should have a maximum load capacity of 15,000 MT.

All bidders are required to post a bid bond equivalent to 10% of the highest value of offered quantity in the form of cashier's/manager's check issued by a reputable bank in Metro Manila or an irrevocable standby Letter of Credit issued by a reputable commercial bank or in the case of an irrevocable stand-by L/C issued by a foreign bank, the same shall be confirmed by a reputable local bank.

Winning bidders are required to submit a performance bond equivalent to 10% of the value of the awarded quanity within three (3) banking days after receipt of the notice of award in the form cashier's/manager's check issued by a reputable bank in Metro Manila or an irrevocable standby Letter of Credit issued by a reputable commercial bank or in the case of an irrevocable stand-by L/C issued by a foreign bank, the same shall be confirmed by a reputable local bank. Bid bond can be converted to performance bond.

List of Eligibility Requirements and Instructions to bidders may be secured starting **28 April 2005** thru **MR. TOMAS R. ESCAREZ**, Assistant Department Manager and **MR. NESTOR U. PUANGCO**, Division Chief III, **Directorate for Marketing Operations, 5th Floor, NFA, Matimyas Bldg., 101 E. Rodriguez Sr. Ave., Quezon City with telephone numbers 712-1564; 742-4140; 743-8696; 711-7433; 740-1977; 712-1708; and 712-1572.**

The terms of reference and offer sheets will be available from **April 28 to May 17, 2005** (8:00 a.m.- 5:00 p.m.) upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P7,500.00.

The **pre-bidding conference** will be held on **May 10, 2005** at **9:00 a.m.** at the **FOOD DEVELOPMENT CENTER BUILDING FTI Complex, Taguig, Metro Manila.**

Submission of bids will be on May 24, 2005 between 8:00 a.m. to 9:55 a.m. at the **FOOD DEVELOPMENT CENTER BUILDING FTI Complex, Taguig, Metro Manila. Opening of bids** will start exactly at **10:00 a.m.**

The National Food Authority reserves the right to reject any or all bid proposals, to waive any required formality or defect therein and may accept the bid/s which is deemed most advantageous to the Agency.

(Sgd.) **JESSUP P. NAVARRO**
Deputy Administrator and
Chairman, BAC

(PDI - April 28 & May 5, 2005)

Republic of the Philippines
PROVINCE OF CAGAYAN
Municipality of Amulung
OFFICE OF THE BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Local Government of Amulung thru its BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE invites all interested and qualified suppliers to apply for eligibility and to bid for the procurement and delivery of the item mentioned below:

ITEM . One (1) Farm Tractor, Engine- Diesel, Type – Natural Aspirated
Size of Tire : 14.9 x 24 front, 184 x 34 rear ,
Trailing Harrow : 20 x 24 HD
Displow : 4 26 Heavy Duty: Drive 4-wheel, Cylinder- 4, Horse Power : 9
Spareparts : Should be available in the locality
Performance . 1 hr/ha. 400 ha./season

APROVED Budget of the Contract (ABC) - P2,392,382.41

Source of Fund – General Fund

Schedule of Activities:
April 27 to May 10, 2005 – Publication in the newspaper of general circulation, posting in the GEPS, BAC Bulletin and various conspicuous places
May 11 to June 9, 2005 – Preparation of Bids (Deadline of submission of eligibility Requirements- June 9, 2005 at 5pm)
May 30, 2005 – Pre-Bid Conference
June 10, 2005 – Eligibility Checking, Receipt and Opening of Bids (at 1:30pm)

Prospective bidders should have experience in similar undertaking with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed item/project for bidding. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Evaluation of Bids shall use the non-discretionary "pass/fail criteria. Post Evaluation of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

The Committee will issue to prospective bidders Eligibility Forms upon submission of the letter of intent and upon payment of a non-refundable fees and costs of bid forms. The Eligibility Requirements shall be submitted to the BAC Secretariat, LGU, Amulung, Cagayan.

All particulars relative to the Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security , Pre-bid Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of RA 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations.

The Local Government of Amulung reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any defect or formality therein and to accept bids considered responsive and most advantageous to the government.

Bid documents shall be available at the BAC Secretariat, Amulung, Cagayan, starting May 11, 2005 upon payment of prescribed fees.

Details of bid items are posted in the web site at the GEPS, BAC Bulletin.

(Sgd.) LUZMINDA L. MACASIO
BAC Chairman

Noted:
(Sgd.) ATTY. NICANOR C. DE LEON
Municipal Mayor

(PDI–April 28 & May 5, 2005)

Four solo exhibits at Food and Art Galerie

FOOD and Art Galerie presents four simultaneous solo exhibits by Kaiseria, Dyna Quizon-Ondoy, Armida Francisco and Hendrix Pereyra. Members of Sining, Kulay, at Tinta (Sikat) Art Group, each artist exhibits colorful pieces of their individual themes. The exhibit runs from May 9-31, with opening cocktails on May 9, at 6:00 p.m.

Four artists, four exhibits, one venue, all this only at Food and Art Gelerie located at the 12/F GT Tower International, Ayala Avenue corner H.V. Dela Costa Street, Makati City. The Gallery hours are from 7am to 9pm on weekdays, and 7am to 1pm on Saturdays. For inquiries, please call 752-5678 or email marketing@raintree.com.ph.

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ALABANG, MUNTINLUPA CITY
☎ 8424503 ☎ 8506465 Fax 8506465
e-mail address: main_classifieds@inquirer.com.ph

OBITUARIES

THE HERITAGE PARK
FORT BONIFACIO
Funeral Home and Crematory
845-2334 to 38; 845-2440

I have fought
the good fight,
I have finished
the race,
I have kept
the faith

(2 Timothy 4)

In Loving Memory of our Beloved

DR. BENITO V. BELEN, M.D.

of San Pablo City

January 12, 1887 – May 5, 1955

on his 50th Death Anniversary

Masses will be said in the following:

1. Cathedral of St. Paul the First Hermit
   San Pablo City .... 6:45 A.M.
2. Nuestra Señora De Los Remedios Parish
   Del Remedios, San Pablo City .... 5:45 P.M.
3. Our Lady of Fatima Parish
   Philamlife Village, Las Piñas City .... 6:30 A.M.
4. St. Alphonsus Mary de Liguori Parish
   Magallanes Village, Makati City .... 7:00 A.M.
5. Sto. Niño de Paz Greenbelt Chapel .... 7:15 A.M.
6. St. Philomena Parish Chapel
   Carlson City, California, U.S.A. .... 8:00 A.M.
7. St. John the Evangelist Parish
   St. Mary Ave., San Francisco, CA .... 9:00 A.M.
8. St. Joseph's Basilica
   Jasper Ave., Edmonton, AB Canada .... 12:15 P.M.
9. Our Lady of Lourdes
   41 Earl St., Toronto, Canada .... 12:10 P.M.
10. St. Mary's Church
    Main St., South Brampton, Canada .... 9:00 A.M.
11. Redemptorist Church, Davao City .... 6:00 A.M.
12. Sta. Ana Church, Davao City .... 12:00 P.M.

His loving wife, Cecilia Belen (†) and his bereaved children and their families: Elsie & Berting, Cora & Banding (†), Tony & Ising, Adeling & Max, Ben and Oyie, request the pious reader to join them in praying for the repose of his soul.

UNITY BANK INC.

Board of Directors, Officers and Staff

announce with deep sorrow
the untimely demise of its

Former President

DR. VIRGILIO A. IGNACIO

(Sept. 20, 1917 – May 2, 2005)

He is survived by his loving children, Josefina & Alberto, Virgilio & Estelita, Lorna, Edna & Manuel, Vifel & Marius, Vic & Teresita, Joy & John.

Relatives and friends request everyone to join in praying for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at La Salle Greenhills Chapel, Ortigas Avenue, Mandaluyong City.

Interment will be on Saturday, May 7, 2005 at Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque after the 8:00 a.m. Mass.

In lieu of flowers, donations to the following charities will be accepted: Don Bosco, Child Hope and Resources for the Blind.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

Always caring... **INQUIRER OBITUARIES**

OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:
❶ Copy of Death Certificate ❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

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Mother's Day Treat

Warm your mom's heart with your deeply felt love note telling her how special she is to you. On May 8, Mother's Day, **INQUIRER CLASSIFIEDS**, the widest reaching classifieds, will highlight a "Mother's Day special section" for personal ads dedicated to the first woman in all our lives.

For loving us with your life; no one else compares to you!
Happy Mama's Day!
Love,
Papa and Jing

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Mom Junie,
You're the best!
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Thanks for all you do.
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Nanay Nene,
Happy Mother's Day
&
Happy 75th Birthday!
We love you!
Lolo Pete, kids and apos

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Mommy Tess,
If there was a day for everything you have given me as a mother, it would be Mother's day everyday.
I love you very much!
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Mommy Myrla,
Thank you for always being there.
Happy Mother's Day!
We Love You!
Pidak, Poy, Soy,
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Take advantage of this offer and this will surely be one of the **BEST** gifts your mom will ever receive and cherish. For more info, you may visit or call any Inquirer branch.

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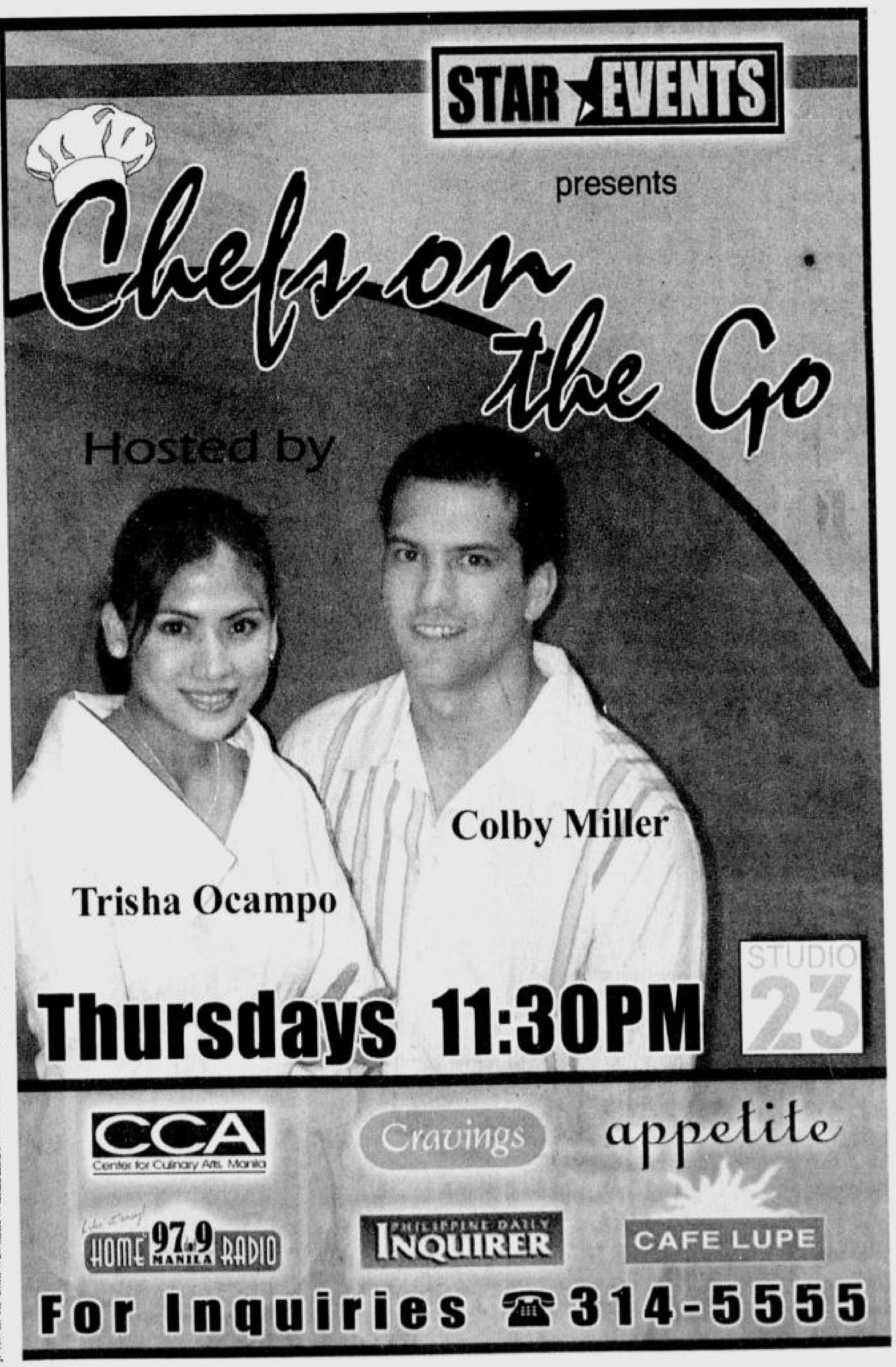

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BUSINESS

Tanduay allots ₱2B for expansion

By Elizabeth Sanchez

LIQUOR firm Tanduay Holdings Inc. (Tanduay) of the Lucio Tan Group is setting aside roughly P2 billion to improve is facilities and expand operations over the next three to four years.

For 2005, the company is spending between P500 million and P1 billion to put up a new bottling plant in Cagayan de Oro as the Mindanao market now accounts for more than a third of its sales, company sources said. Luzon comes in second with 15 percent of sales.

The new plant will add to Tanduay's existing three liquor bottling plants in Cabuyao, Laguna; Negros Occidental, and in Quiapo, Manila.

The Cagayan de Oro plant will help trim freight costs and help the company keep its growing market share in Mindanao.

Total capacity for the Tanduay group stood at 15.5 million cases. It is targeting to increase capacity to 16.5 million cases this year even without its new CDO plant.

Tanduay is also upbeat about the first quarter despite slightly weaker volumes due to an average 13-percent increase in liquor prices implemented last December.

Last year, Tanduay Holdings' net income rose by 88 percent to P660 million. Net sales jumped 22 percent to P6.76 billion as well.

Tanduay earlier estimated that it would need P3 billion to buy six liquor-related companies that were seen to enhance the value of the rum distributor and make it more attractive to prospective investors. The company is presently working on securing possible funding from local and foreign banks.

Company sources added that once the acquisition has been completed by the second half of this year and the assets of its target companies folded in, Tanduay's total assets would grow to nearly P10 billion from the present P7.3 billion.

Last March, Tanduay's board approved the acquisition of majority control in six firms involved in liquor and alcohol operations.

Tanduay corporate secretary Cecilia Pesayco said management was directed to negotiate "for the best terms and conditions, including tax costs" for the purchase of Asian Alcohol Corp., Absolute Chemicals Inc., DyZum Distillery Inc., Cabuyao Packaging Corp., Flor de Caña Shipping Inc., and Negros General Services.

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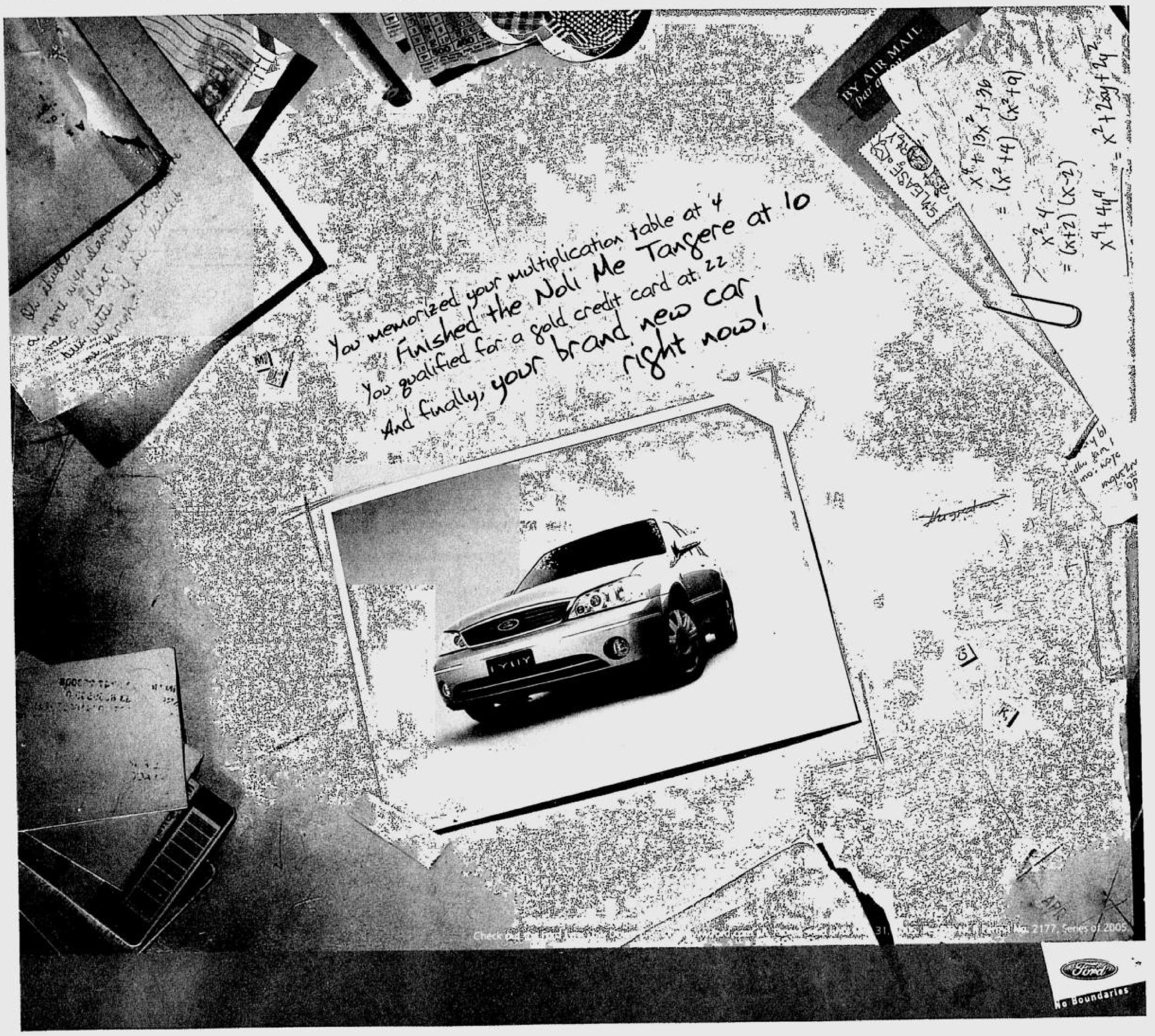
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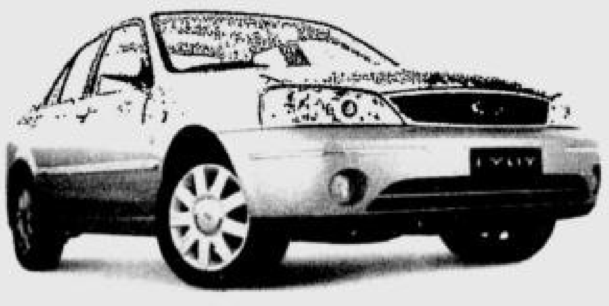

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THURSDAY, MAY 5, 2005
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BAKED Oysters with Cheese and Mushroom

DAING na Bangus

Early bird will catch these goodies

By Cesar Miguel G. Escaño
Contributor

A TASTY surprise awaits you at Something Fishy in Eastwood.

The seafood grill and bar has unveiled an all-you-can-eat breakfast buffet. Its menu has also been expanded with more than a dozen new entries.

For only P80, you can choose from about 14 breakfast items. You can have plain or garlic rice with any or all of the following: Beef Tapa, Pork Tocino, Lumpiang Shanghai, Sauteed Hotdogs in Onions, Sunny Side-up and Scrambled Eggs, Longganiza, Chicken Adobo, Boneless Bangus, and Omelette with Tomatoes, Onions and Mushrooms.

You can also enjoy Pancakes, Palitaw, Beef Mami, Pansit Palabok, Chicken Arrozcaldo.

Be sure to empty your plates, though or you will be charged double (P180) if you have any leftover.

The breakfast buffet is available 1-10 am. Something Fishy's Jom Policarpio says the offering has been a hit with early risers and people from nearby call centers. Even party-goers wanting to cool down after midnight are welcome. "The items are also good for *pulutan*," Policarpio notes.

> 'What's good about Something Fishy is that it is reasonably priced'

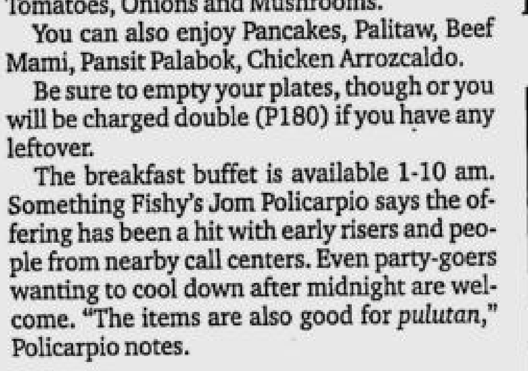
New dishes

The popular seafood restaurant's treasure chest has also been filled with gleaming new dishes. Bite into these treats and you'll find that they taste as good as gold.

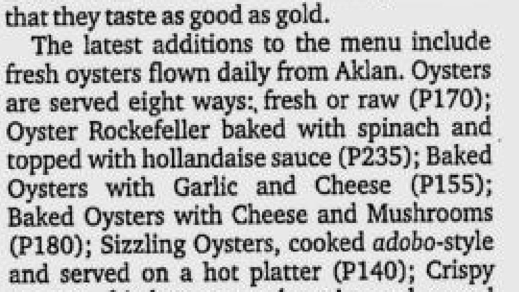
The latest additions to the menu include fresh oysters flown daily from Aklan. Oysters are served eight ways:, fresh or raw (P170); Oyster Rockefeller baked with spinach and topped with hollandaise sauce (P235); Baked Oysters with Garlic and Cheese (P155); Baked Oysters with Cheese and Mushrooms (P180); Sizzling Oysters, cooked *adobo*-style and served on a hot platter (P140); Crispy Oysters, fried to a crunchy crisp and served with sweet chili, tartar or wasabe sauce (P145); Oyster Cake (P175); Kinilaw na Talaba, raw oysters marinated in coconut vinegar, bell pepper, onions, and pickled mango (P155).

The menu also introduces Apahap or Seabass, steamed or fried with sweet and sour sauce (P65/100g). Other new dishes are Pinais na Alimasag, stuffed crabs broiled in banana leaves (P145); Nilasing na Hipon sa Taba ng Talangka, fresh shrimps sauteed in

EARLY/ C2



PINAIS na Alimasag



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MAY 9	Mon	PM	Dishes: Wu sih spare ribs, [illegible], Beef [illegible] clear soup, Steamed eggs with vermicelli
10	Tue	PM	Dimsum: Beef balls, Fried Man tho, Kua Pao with fillings
11	Wed	AM	Roasting: Peking Duck complete with sauce, Pancake, etc
		PM	Roasting: Assorted soyed dishes, Cold cuts
12	Thu	PM	Roasting: Roasted suckling pig
13	Fri	PM	Dimsum: Chiu Chow chili sauce, Fried dumpling, Fried spring roll
14	Sat	AM	Dishes: Pancit Canton, Fried fresh scallops, "TongKong" stuffed bean curd, Pampano with catsup
16	Mon	PM	Sp. Dimsum: How to make Ho Fan, Cheung Fan, Dried shrimps in cheung Fan,Sauce for Cheung Fan
17	Tue	PM	Sp. Dimsum: Stir fried beef with Ho Fan, Stewed spare ribs with Ho Fan, Stir fried "Kuei Tiow"
18	Wed	AM	Dimsum: Cantonese Congee, Beef noodles, Vegetable in oyster sauce
		PM	Dimsum: Crystal cookies, Salted dumplings, Sweet potato buchi
19	Thu	PM	Dishes: Stuffed 8 treasures (pat po) chicken, Steamed pampano with beans sauce, Steamed prawns with garlic, Yangchow fried rice
20	Fri	PM	Dimsum: Shrimp dumpling, Fruits or sago pudding, Kuchay empanada
21	Sat	AM	Sp. Class: Dishes: Grilled steaks Beef, Pork, Fish, Cream soup, Side dishes
23	Mon	PM	Sp. Class: New Dishes: Tong Poh pork, Cold seafood pudding, Steamed bean curd with mashed greens, Stuffed squids with glutinous rice
24	Tue	PM	Sp. Class: How to make superior soup stock, How to treat sea cucumber and shark' fins
25	Wed	AM	Braised whole shark's fin, Shark's fin with crab meat and roe soup, Stir fried shark's fin with eggs and vegetables
		PM	Braised sea cucumber, Sea cucumber double boiled with duck, cold sea cucumber
26	Thu	PM	Sp. Class: New Dishes: "Yong Chun" boiled duck soup, 8 treasures fuyong, Ham with honey sauce, Sea cucumber stuffed with shrimps
27	Fri	AM	Dishes: Xiamen bihon, Spare ribs with salt & chili, Chao chao* chicken, Stir fried crab meat with eggs and vegetables
		PM	Dishes: Shrimp cutlet, Steamed crabs with garlic, Fried shrimp fritters, Chiang Thai shi bean curd
28	Sat	AM	Dimsum: Fish siomai, Fresh bamboo roll, Crispy taro puff

•All enrollees must register and pay or make deposits before the scheduled dates to avail of 10% discount. No discount when you enroll thru telephone.
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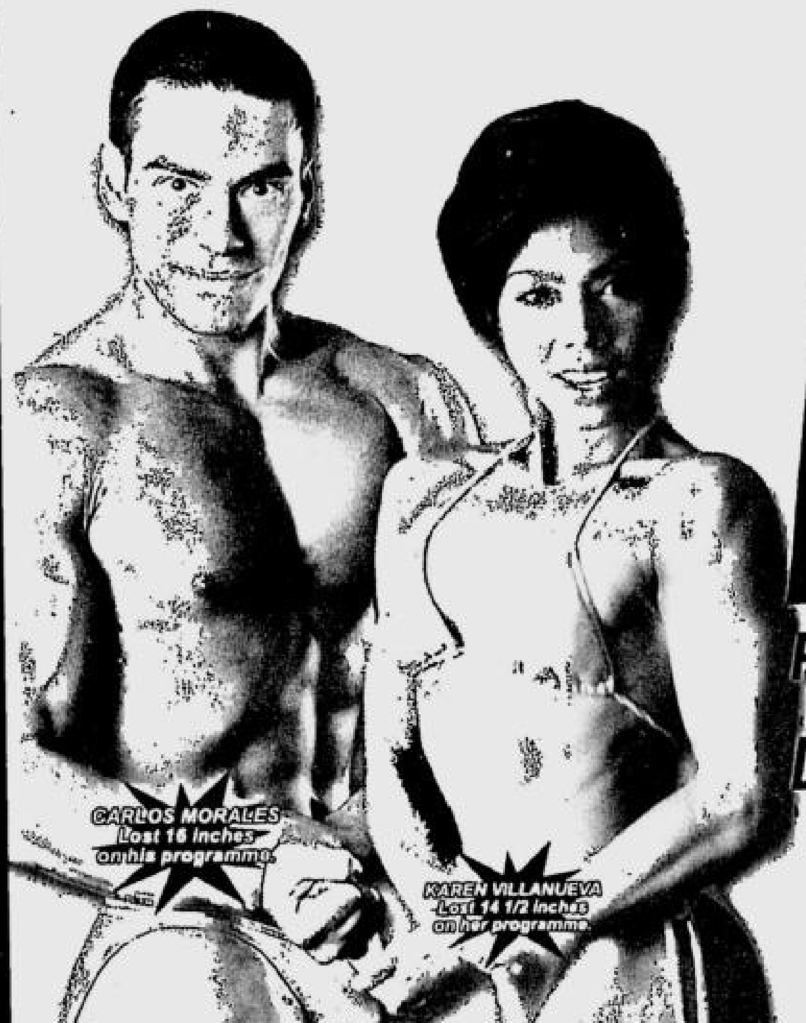

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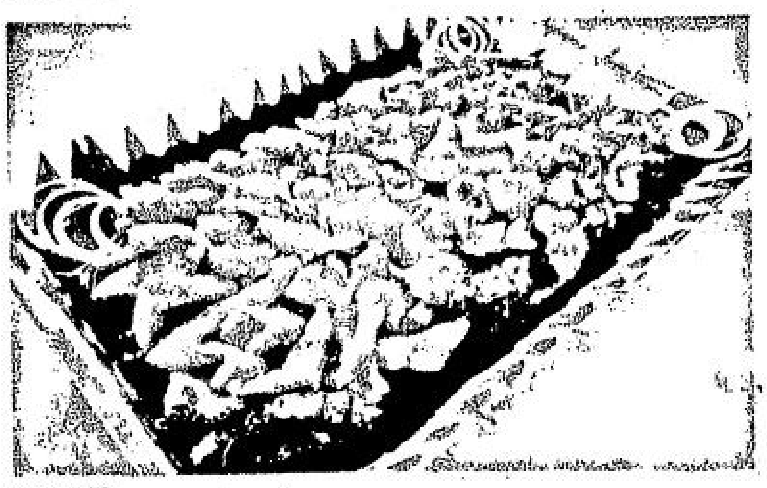
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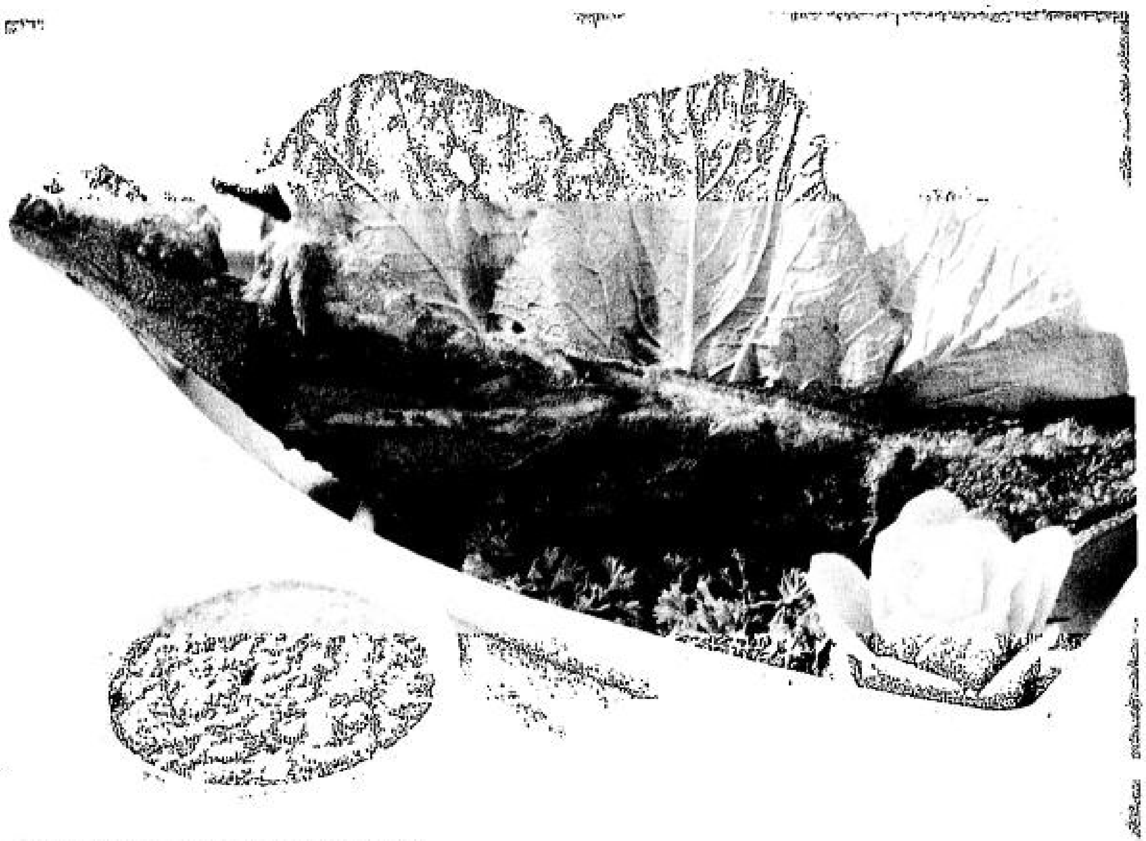
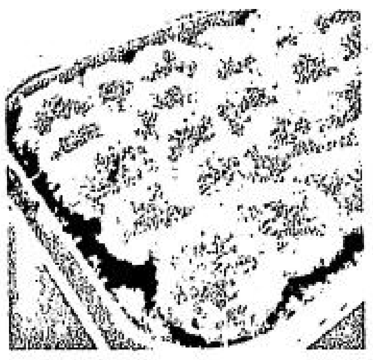

CRISPY Hito with Buro and Mustasa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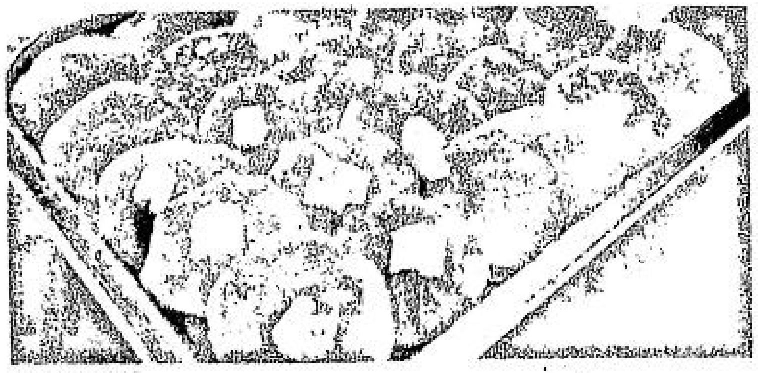
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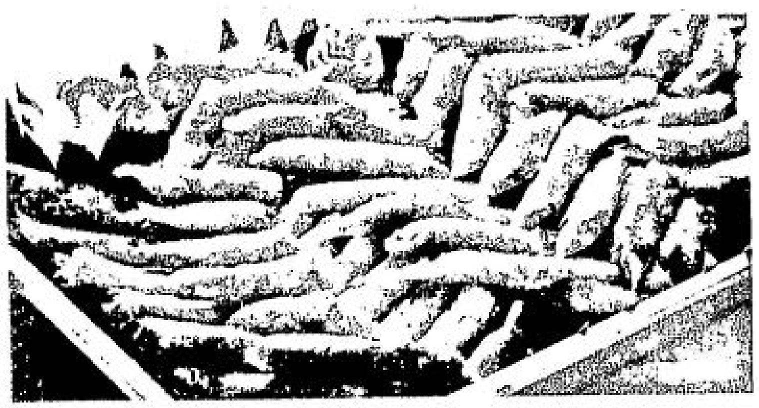
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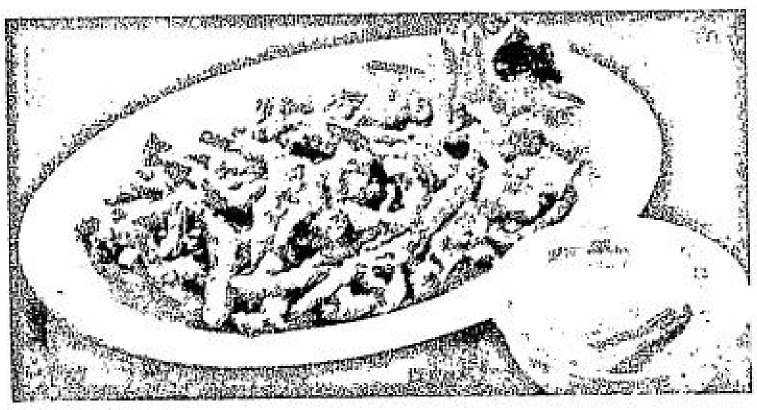
CRISPY Tenga

Early bird will catch these goodies

From page C1

crab fat (P135); Crispy Hito with Buro and Mustasa, deep-fried catfish served with fermented rice sauce and blanched mustard leaves (P210).

The health-conscious can try Lato Salad (P75) consisting of fresh seaweed marinated in coconut vinegar and topped with onions, tomatoes and pickled mango.

Non-seafood additions include: Humba, a traditional Filipino dish consisting of pork belly stewed in soy vinegar, seasoned with sugar and garnished with *saba* (P95); Lengua Estofado, stewed ox tongue (P165); and Chicken Binakol, chicken marinated in salt and pepper with coconut meat and sautéed garlic, onion and ginger (P174).

"What's good about Something Fishy is that it is reasonably priced. Plus, we don't include a service charge," says Policarpio.

"The (restaurant's) owners are all game anglers so they know best how to cook a fish," he adds.

Something Fishy seafood grill and bar is located at Eastwood Citywalk in Quezon City

Call 4216412.

THE BREAKFAST buffet has been a hit with early risers and employees of nearby call centers.

JUST SHOP 1 turns this May!

Pucker up — Jenni Epperson has surprises for everyone.

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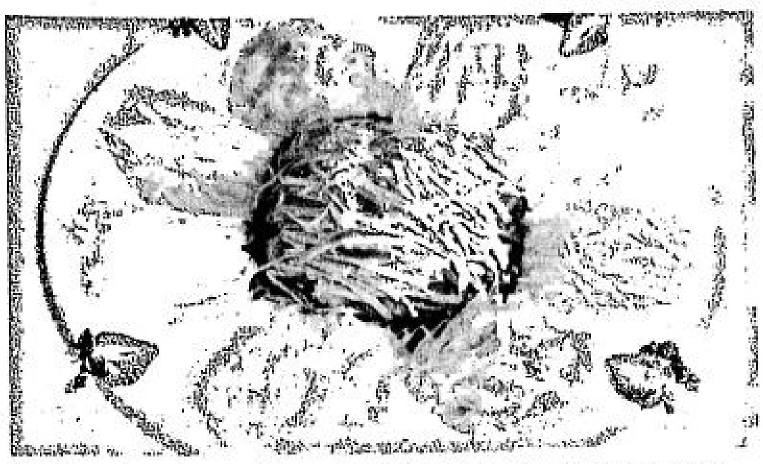
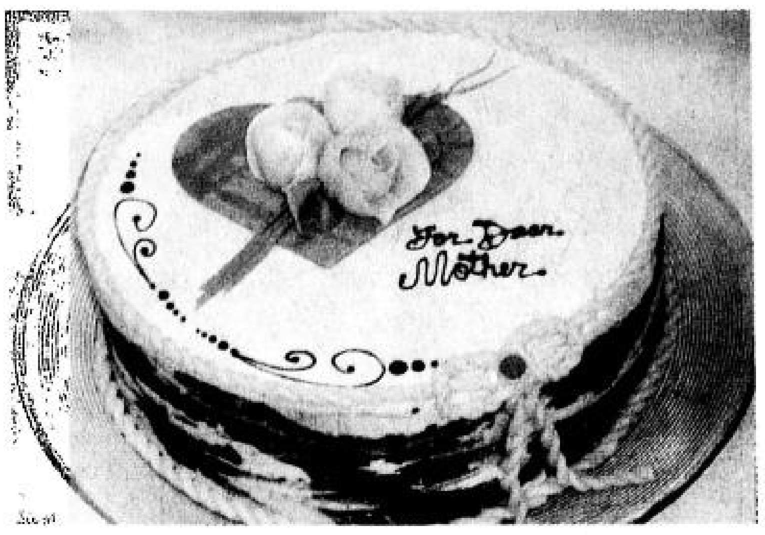


JADE Garden offers mothers a lauriat of Shredded Roast Duck with assorted fresh fruits, Fresh Pumpkin with assorted seafood soup, Baked Shrimps with butter and garlic, Steamed Lapu-Lapu Chiuchow Style, Stir-fried Scallops and Sliced Chicken with Broccoli, Braised Sea Cucumber with imported mushrooms, Baked Crabs with XO sauce, Fried Rice with bacon and garlic, seasonal fruit platter and Mango Shake with sago. Jade Garden is at Greenbelt 1, Ayala Center, Makati. Call 8922319, 8922636 or 8124548.

SUSHI-YA treats mothers to a free Sushi-Ya Salad, to go along with regulars like Donburi, Tofu Furai, Tempura, Teriyaki and Teppanyaki and hot and cold noodles. Visit Sushi-Ya at Tomas Morato, Libis, Robinsons Place Manila, Robinsons Place Galleria, SM Megastrip and SM Pampanga.



HYATT Regency Manila features a special brunch on May 8 at Café Al Fresco and Tempura Misono Japanese Restaurant. On Mother's Day, mom gets a rose and a box of chocolates. A free group photo will be taken by the hotel's in-house photographer and the photograph will be presented after the brunch. Call 8331234.

Delectable treats for mothers

DINING OUT

MANILA Diamond Hotel's Palm Court Café honors mothers on May 8 with Special Seafood Buffet. For every group of three availing of the buffet, mothers get to dine for free. Children from 6-10 years old get 50-percent discount and kids 5 years old and below dine for free. Meanwhile, Yurakuen Japanese Restaurant offers Zuwaigani crab with ponzu sauce and Kaki-Goori shaved ice drinks until May 31. Call 5283000.

HYATT Hotel and Casino Manila's Lily Cantonese restaurant offers an eat-all-you-can dimsum on Mother's Day. A special buffet awaits you at Market Café. A barbecue buffet at the hotel's pool side is an alternative. Call 2451234.

KIMPURA Japanese Restaurant serves moms Sweet Salad for free. It has fresh buco strips, *nata de coco*, lychees and almond jelly. Kimpura is located at Greenhills Shopping Center (tel. 7218816/ 7218851) and Glorietta 2, Ayala Center, Makati (8932307).

PEKING Garden has a special set menu for mothers. This includes four kinds of appetizers, assorted seafood with fish maw soup, Peking duck, sauteed prawns with scrambled egg white and crab roe, deep-fried yellow cracker fish with Sichuan vinegar sauce, stewed Tientsin cabbage with dried scallop in supreme soup, deep-fried peppercorn crabs, braised e-fu noodles with straw mushrooms, steamed supreme soup and pork dumpling and chilled mango with sago, Peking Garden is located at 2/L, Glorietta 2, Ayala Center, Makati. Call 8179066 or 8179067.

INTERCONTINENTAL Manila offers Mother's Day treats. Prince Albert Rotisserie serves gourmet dishes a la carte-style while Café Jeepney will have special buffet. There will be a poolside barbecue at Sol y Sombra. All moms will get a complimentary Drink of the Month and a chance to pick out a prize. Early reservations for Prince Albert and Café Jeepney will get a 15-percent discount. Call 8159711.

HOLIDAY Inn Galleria Manila presents Moms Eat Free Mother's Day special buffet offering until May 8 at the hotel's Raphael Café-Restaurant. For every family of four, mom gets free buffet meal, surprise gifts and a chance to win raffle prizes at the end of the promo. Call 6337111.

MANILA Pavilion Hotel's Rotisserie features Mama Mi Amor on May 7. The menu includes Mother's Day Teezer, Warm Sea Scallops Quiche on summer greens with sun-dried Tomato Vinaigrette, Creamy Asparagus and Basil Foam Soup, Calamansi Sherbet, Roast Beef Tenderloin with peppercorn sauce, Garlic Prawns, Spinach Leaf and Marble Potatoes and Symphony of Desserts. On May 8, a special buffet awaits at Café Coquilla. Call 5261212.

BISTRO Group of Restaurants has put together breakfast treats, lunches, dinner and free gifts. Woo mom with her favorite dishes from Italianni's, Friday's and Outback. Visit TGI Friday's, Glorietta 3; Robinsons Place Manila; Alabang Town Center; Hotel Rembrandt, QC; Brickroad of Sta. Lucia East. Italianni's is at Glorietta 4; Alabang Town Center; SM City Bicutan; Greenbelt 2; Greenhills; Eastwood Libis; Tomas Morato; and Gateway Mall, Araneta Center, QC. Outback branches are in Libis, Glorietta 4 and Alabang Town Center.

THE RICHMONDE Hotel's Richmonde Grill offers a luncheon buffet of international cuisine on Mother's Day. Moms will be given miniature blueberry cheesecake tokens. All mothers availing of the Mother's Day buffet also get the chance to win gift certificates for an overnight stay for two or lunch buffet for two. Call 6387777.

THE WESTIN Philippine Plaza presents Mother's Day Buffet. Say cheers with endless rounds of champagne and sparkling wine. Let mom feast on carvings of prime rib of beef and seafood. All mothers taking the buffet will receive perfume giveaways from Aigner and roses. Call 5515555.

DISCOVERY Suites treats moms to a massage, lunch buffet at Café Berrio, glass of Asti Martini, gift pack from L'Occitane and giveaways for her kids courtesy of Granny Goose. Moms availing of the lunch buffet on May 8 are automatically qualified to join Mother's Day raffle and will get exclusive invites to all Mother's Day activities. Call 6352222.

THE LEGEND Villas welcomes mothers with a special lunch at Lola Maria coffee shop and restaurant. One mother from every group availing of the Mother's Day lunch will get a special gift. An illustrator will present mom with a sketch of herself. The Legend Villas is on Pioneer St., Mandaluyong. Call 6331501 to 15.

SUPER Bowl of China offers dishes specially prepared for couples and the family. For P500, couples can choose from two set meals. Or bring the whole family and enjoy the meal set for four to five persons or six to eight persons. For ordering any of the set menu, each branch of Super Bowl of China is raffling off a free makeover treat to one lucky mom. Super Bowl of China is at SM Megamall; Jupiter St., Makati; Glorietta 4, Ayala Center; Chefs Avenue, Festival Mall, Alabang; SM City North Edsa; Eastwood City Walk 2, Libis; SM City in Fairview; The Promenade, Greenhills; Gateway Mall, Araneta Center, Cubao.

BURGOO American Bar and Restaurant is giving away special gifts to all moms who dine in at any Burgoo outlets until May 8. Merchandise such as aprons, key chains, notepads, etc. courtesy of Tabasco and Lea & Perrins Worcestershire Sauce will be given to all moms for every order of Shrimp and Ribs Platter. Burgoo has branches at T. Morato, Quezon City; Power Plant Mall, Makati; The Podium, Ortigas; The Promenade, Greenhills; and Gateway Mall Araneta Center. Call 9277424, 6875254 or 8981815.

DUSIT Hotel Nikko presents All for Mom promo on May 7-9. Diners availing of the buffet at The Café and set menus at Benjarong Royal Thai Restaurant, Benkay Japanese Restaurant, Thien Duong Vietnamese Restaurant and Fiesta San Miguel will receive a complimentary Chocolate Spanish Vanilla Cake if dining with a minimum of four persons and a surprise gift if dining with three or less companions. Mothers availing of the promo will also get the chance to win special prizes from the pick-a-prize bowl. Call 8673333.

TAKE mom on a seafood trip at Sorabol Korean BBQ. Sorabol has added four seafood entrees to its menu: Sean Son Chim, a rock bass (*lapu-lapu*) dish; Oki Bomboo, a fusion of crabs, squid and bean sprouts; Hemul Chaptang, seafood casserole; and Kalchi Chorim, swordfish with Korean tofu and zucchini.Each dish comes with free two cups of Kongki Bap (rice). For a minimum purchase of P500, Mom will also get to enjoy Strawberry Graham Delight. Enjoy these healthy dishes and desserts at Sorabol Korean BBQ, Connecticut Strip (Center Car Park Building), Greenhills Shopping Center (tel. 7271547) and SM Southmall, Las Piñas (8004729).

CHINESE MONK casual dining restaurant at the ground floor of Power Plant Mall, Rockwell Center, Makati, is giving away free Stuffed Tofu to all moms who dine in at the resto. Also, special merchandise awaits them courtesy of Tabasco and Lea & Perrins Worcestershire Sauce. Call 8974129.

Special 'joint' projects for dad and kids

CHICKEN Menudo Buns

MONTEREY Longanisa Coins with Egg and Onion Omelet and Star Garlic Rice

From page C4

serve. Makes four sandwiches.

Monterey Longanisa Coins with Egg and Onion Omelet and Star Garlic Rice

6 pcs Monterey Regional Longanisa, choice of any of the following variants: *hamonado*, Vigan, Alaminos, Lucban

Star Garlic Rice:

2 c cooked leftover rice

2 tbsp Star Garlic Margarine

Omelet:

4 pcs eggs

¼ c Magnolia Fresh Milk

2 tbsp onion leeks or spring onions, chopped

Pinch of Italian herb seasoning

Salt and pepper

2 tbsp Magnolia Gold Butter

Procedure:

Slice *longanisa* into thin rounds. Pan-fry and drain in paper towels. Set aside.

In a wok, melt margarine and stir fry rice. Mix well. Set aside.

In a bowl, combine eggs, milk, leeks or spring onions and seasonings. Mix well.

Heat a frying pan and melt butter. Pour mixture and cook over low heat until mixture sets.

To serve, cut omelet into two. Form into a cone and place on a serving plate. Stuff with *longanisa* coins. Serve garlic rice on the side.

Makes two servings.

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MAY - JUNE SCHEDULE
RECREATIONAL AND ONE-DAY BUSINESS CLASS

BAKING CLASSES

May 11 - 13, Wednesday - Friday COOKING AND BAKING WORKSHOP FOR KIDS. Let your children enjoy working in the kitchen with our Cake-Decorator Pastry Chef Ann Baluyut. The class is not only teaching your kids how to cook and bake, they will also learn some basic crafts for them to have fun with. The recipes are: Day 1- 2 Kinds of Fried Rice, Pork Siomai, Chicken Macaroni Soup, Chocolate Crispy Cookies and Painted Cookies. Day 2 Shrimp Tempura, Steamed Eggs, Chocolate Crinkles and Apple Cookies. Day 3 Baked Honey Mustard Chicken, Baked Lasagna, Chocolate Chip Cookies and Oreo Cheesecake. Classes will start from 10:00 3:00 p.m. and the fee is P3,600 for the 3 days or P1,200.00 per day. Recipes and ingredients are all included.

May 18, Wednesday BREAD MAKING. Master Baker from Australia Mike Rossiter will teach you the secrets of successful breadmaking for White Bread, Pan De Sal, Francis Rolls and European Bread Rolls. One-on-one instruction. Recipes include all ingredients for P1,200.00 from 10:00 4:00 p.m. NEW CLASS.

May 24, Tuesday CHEESECAKES: WITH A DIFFERENCE. Chef & Food Columnist Adoree Chong Uy will present new ways to prepare cheesecakes. Recipes include Ube Mousse Cheesecake, Langka Cheesecake, Mango Cheesecake, Dalandan Curd Cheesecake, Pandan Cheesecake and Green Tea Cheesecake for P1,500.00 including all ingredients from 10:00 4:00 p.m.

May 27, Friday A CLASS FULL OF BROWNIES 2. Whether Business or for the Home these original and great tasting brownies are also easy to make. Chef Junjun demonstrates Black Bottom Brownie with Pecans, Mint Brownies, Pistachio Brownies, Chocolate Rocks, White Chocolate-Macadamia Blondies and Fudgy Orange Liquer Brownies for P1,200.00 including all ingredients from 10:00 4:00 p.m. NEW CLASS.

June 8 - 10, Wednesday - Friday. MERINGUE WORKSHOP. A 3-day Hands-on workshop for bakers and hobbyist. The white, light and heavenly meringue will be made into cookies, cakes, spoon desserts, toppings and more. You will enjoy making Meringue Cookies, Pavlova, Canonigo, Brazo de Mercedes, Sansrival, Mango Torte, Concorde and more for P3,500.00 including all ingredients from 10:00 4:00 p.m. NEW CLASS.

COOKING CLASSES

May 05, Thursday PINOY STEWS 1 Common and tasty savory stews for everyone to love and enjoy. Delicious recipes of Chef Junjun starts with Beef Stew, Pinatisang Short Ribs, Estofadong Pata ng Baboy, Chicken Pastel, Monggo and Chorizo Stew and Mechadong Navotas. For P1,200.00 including all ingredients from 10:00 4:00 p.m.

May 06, Friday CHINESE DIMSUMS. Our Chinese Pastry and Cake-Decorator Chef, Ann Baluyut will share with us her family-own recipes of assorted dumplings like Siomai and other famouse Chinese dimsums. The recipes are Eight Treasure Spring Rolls, Sweet Peanut Soup, Sesame Chicken Roll-ups, Pork Siomai, Shrimp Dumpling, Quail Eggs Siomai and Beef Siomai include all ingredients for P1,200.00 from 10:00 4:00 p.m.

May 07, Saturday DAVE'S SPECIAL BAGOONG CLASS. Binagoongang Baboy, Sambal Pork and Gulay Luto sa Bagoong are just some of the recipes that Chef David Fajardo will be teaching us in this lifestyle class. Recipes include all ingredients from 10:00 4:00 p.m. for P1,200.00. NEW CLASS.

May 08, Sunday THE SAUSAGE WORKSHOP 1. Recipes from Chef David for you to learn that can be use in business or as gifts. The recipes are Italian Sausage, Morcillas or Blood Sausage, Longganisang Calumpit, Breakfast Pork Sausage, Seafood Sausage, Sulipan Sausage and Chorizo de Jabah. Recipes include all ingredients for P1,000.00 from 10:00 3:00 p.m.

May 09, Monday A TASTE OF VIETNAM 5. New set of recipes from Chef Annlie de Lemos of Vietnam Foodhouse will be demonstrated for you to enjoy. The recipes are Beef with Lemongrass, Grilled Beef with Pork Fat, Beef with Spices, Bo Nuong La Lot, Beef Congee, Beef Sate and Beef Barbeque with Lemon for P1,200.00 including all ingredients from 1:00 4:00 p.m. NEW CLASS.

May 10, Tuesday BASIC SUSHI AND SASHIMI WS 2. For the 2nd part of the Sushi and Sashimi Class, Chef Gene will demonstrate How to Fillet a Flat Fish and will teach us how to make Rainbow Roll, Sushi Rice, Futo Maki Roll, Gari, Aji, Uzuzukuri Sauce and Tamago. Recipes include all ingredients from 10:00 3:00 p.m. for P1,000.00.

May 14, Saturday LASAP: TEMPTING FAVORITES. The recipes of Adobong Crispy Pata, Tiyan ng Bangus sa Utaw, Sizzling Kuaket, Laing sa Lasap, Suri-saring Lumpiang Paborito, Ensalada de Pollo and Guinomis for the dessert from Chef Gene Gonzalez. P1,000.00 including ingredients from 10.00 to 3:00 PM.

May 16, Monday INDIAN COOKING. Learn the basics of an exotic Indian meal from Chef Gene with the use of authentic yet available ingredients. Dishes include favorites such as Chapatie, Vegetable and Lentil Sambar, Date and Tamarind Chutney, Lamb do Piaza, Tamarind Chicken, Mango Kulfi, Bombay Style Prawns, Caramelized Onion and Fruit and Nut Pilau for P1,200.00 from 10:00 4:00 p.m. including all ingredients.

May 17, Tuesday A TASTE OF VIETNAM 6. Another delicious set of recipes from Chef Analie de Lemos of Vietnam FoodHouse for us to learn and enjoy, the recipes are Pork Ears with Rice Wrapper and Vegetables, Papaya Salad, Green Mango Salad with Beef, Chicken Curry with Sweet Potato and Beef Curry. The recipes include all ingredients for P1,200.00 from 1:00 4:00 p.m. NEW CLASS.

May 20, Friday SAUSAGE WORKSHOP 2. Chef David teaches his favorite exotic sausages like Fresh Pork Sausage with Apple and Dried Onion, Italian Sausage with 3 Cheeses and Red Wine, Duck Sausage with Fresh Sage and Roasted Garlic, Greek Sausage Loukanika, Tuscan Sausage, Nurnberg Sausage and Sweet Italian Sausage. The workshop includes recipes plus ingredients for P1,000.00 from 10:00 3:00 p.m.

May 21, Saturday DAVE'S PASTA SPECIALS. Chef David Fajardo presents his Sicilian style recipes from The Villa Italia Restaurant in Houston. Recipes include Pomodoro with Italian Sausage, Seafood Pesto, Pasta Primavera, Penne with Roasted Garlic and Chicken Picatta with Angel's Hair Pasta. Including all ingredients from 10:00 2:00 for P1,000.00.

May 22, Sunday PINOY KAKANIN 1. Pinoy Kakanin recipes from Chef David such as Pichi-piching Kamoteng Kahoy, Pichi-piching Green Pimpig, Sapin-sapin, Puto, Puto (Flour) and Kalamay na Kalabasa for P1,000.00 from 10.00 2.00 p.m. including all ingredients.

May 25, Wednesday SPANISH FOOD FOR PEOPLE WHO WANT EASY COOKING. New Spanish recipes from Gourmet Palate's Betina Legarda that can be learned and enjoyed. The recipes are Patatas Bravas (Spicy potato Chunks), Redondo de Ternera (Stewed Round of Beef), Pollo ala Jerez Oloroso (Chicken in Oloroso Sauce), Lentejas al estilo Aragon (Aragon Lentil Pot), Huevos Ala Flamenca (Flamenco Eggs) and Paella Estilo Murciano (Seafood Paella) for P1,500.00 including ingredients from 10.00 3:00 p.m. NEW CLASS.

May 26, Thursday THE RICE CLASS. Assorted rice recipes from Pastry and Cake Decorator Chef, Ana Baluyut will be demonstrated to us. The recipes are Fried Rice Duet, Baked Seafood Rice, Kung Pao Chicken Rice, Curry Pork Rice, Spare ribs Rice and Fried Tuna Rice. Recipes include all ingredient for P1,200.00 from 10.00 3.00 p.m.

June 02, Thursday THAI FAVORITES 1. Bangkok Chef Chariya Thaikupt will teach her favorite Thai dishes like Tom Yam, Pad Thai, Chicken Pandan, Chicken Green Curry and Tako in Pandan leaves. P1,200.00 including all ingredients from 1:00 4:00 p.m.

June 03, Friday ASIAN NOODLES. Chef Chariya will teach us different kinds of noodles from Thailand, Vietnam and other countries of our Asian nation. Recipes include Mee Krob, Kwaey Teow, Laksa, Khao Pun and Lad Na. Including all ingredients for P1,200.00 from 1:00 4:00 p.m.

WE WOULD APPRECIATE IF YOU COULD CALL AT LEAST TWO DAYS BEFORE THE CLASS FOR RESERVATION.

DIPLOMA IN PROFESSIONAL CULINARY ARTS PROGRAM

The Professional Culinary Arts Program prepares students for professional entry into the food service industry. This intensive program integrates classical and modern culinary techniques from the finest institutions abroad with kitchen management skills. Students learn how to prepare soups, sauces, vegetables, entrees, breads, pastries and desserts. They will learn how to identify, fabricate and portion meat, poultry, fish and shellfish. The course will also provide the introductory skills on Asian and Halal cooking, wine appreciation, gastronomy, table service and back of the house operations.

TESDA ACCREDITED PROGRAM. This program is a hands-on training series for students to gain proficiency in various skills needed to perform at professional standards in a commercial kitchen. The students will also prepare buffets and be involved in actual functions.

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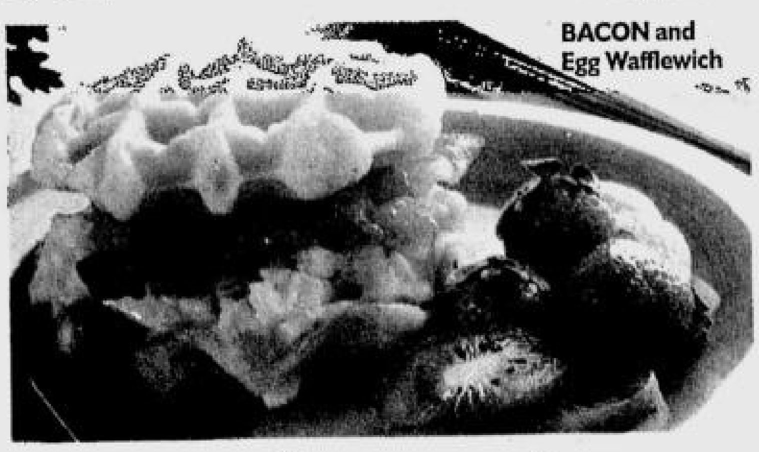
Classes will start on June 13. Enrollment is ongoing.
For inquiries and reservations, call 726-9326 or 725-5089 and look for Marilyn or Glads.

Special 'joint' projects for dad and kids



BACON and Egg Wafflewich

MAKE Mom feel like a queen on Mother's Day. Let her wake up to delicious aromas by serving her breakfast in bed.

San Miguel Purefoods Culinary Center has easy-to-prepare breakfast ideas that Dad and kids can do together to make Mom feel special.

For more recipes and culinary events, visit www.mygreatfood.com

Bacon and Egg Wafflewich

4 strips Purefoods Maple-flavored Bacon
2 tbsp Magnolia Nutri-Oil
2 pcs eggs
¼ c Magnolia Fresh Milk
Salt and pepper to taste
2 pcs Magnolia Cheese Singles
2 tbsp mayonnaise
4 pcs store-bought Belgian waffles

In a skillet, fry bacon in oil and set aside. In a bowl, beat the eggs, add the fresh milk and season with salt and pepper. Cook the scrambled eggs in the same skillet where the bacon was fried. Set aside.

Spread mayonnaise on one side of the waffles. Put cheese, scrambled eggs and bacon. Top with another waffle to make a sandwich. Toast for two to three minutes until waffle is warm and the cheese is melted. May be served with maple syrup.

Makes two servings.

Bread and Butter Pudding

2 c baguette, cut into cubes
2 pcs eggs
½ c Magnolia Fresh Milk
½ c all-purpose cream
¼ c sugar
Pinch of salt
2 tbsp Magnolia Gold Butter for greasing

Cinnamon Nut topping:

¼ c brown sugar
1 tbsp cinnamon powder
¼ c coarsely chopped nuts (walnuts or cashew)

Sauce:

2 pcs egg yolks
3 tbsp sugar
½ c Magnolia Fresh Milk
2 tbsp all-purpose flour
2 tbsp Magnolia Gold Butter

Pre-heat oven toaster. Grease a loaf pan or a baking dish that will fit in an oven toaster. Set aside.

BREAD and Butter Pudding

In a bowl, combine beaten eggs, milk, cream, sugar and salt. Blend well. Set aside.

In another bowl, combine brown sugar, cinnamon powder and chopped nuts.

To assemble, place bread cubes into prepared pan. Pour milk mixture then top with cinnamon nut mixture.

Bake for 20 minutes in the oven toaster.

Sauce: Combine all ingredients in a saucepan. Cook over moderate heat stirring constantly. Serve with pudding.

Makes two servings.

Chicken Menudo Buns

2 tbsp Magnolia Nutri-Oil
¼ c chopped onions
1 tbsp minced garlic
250 g Magnolia Chicken Giniling
1 pc small potato, cut into cubes
1 pc small carrot, cut into cubes
¼ c chicken broth
½ c tomato sauce
Soy sauce to taste
1 tsp sugar
1 tsp *calamansi*
2 tbsp Magnolia Cheddar Cheese, grated
Salt and pepper to taste
4 pcs large *pan de sal*, toasted and sliced in half

In a skillet, heat oil and saute onions until translucent. Add garlic and saute for another minute. Add chicken *giniling* and let cook. Add cubed potatoes and carrots and stir to mix.

Pour in chicken broth and let simmer for a few minutes. Add tomato sauce, soy sauce, sugar and *calamansi*. Bring to a boil then immediately lower heat to a simmer. When potatoes and carrots are nearly cooked, add cheddar cheese and season with salt and pepper according to taste. Let simmer for another minute.

Fill toasted *pan de sal* with *menudo* and

SPECIAL/ C3

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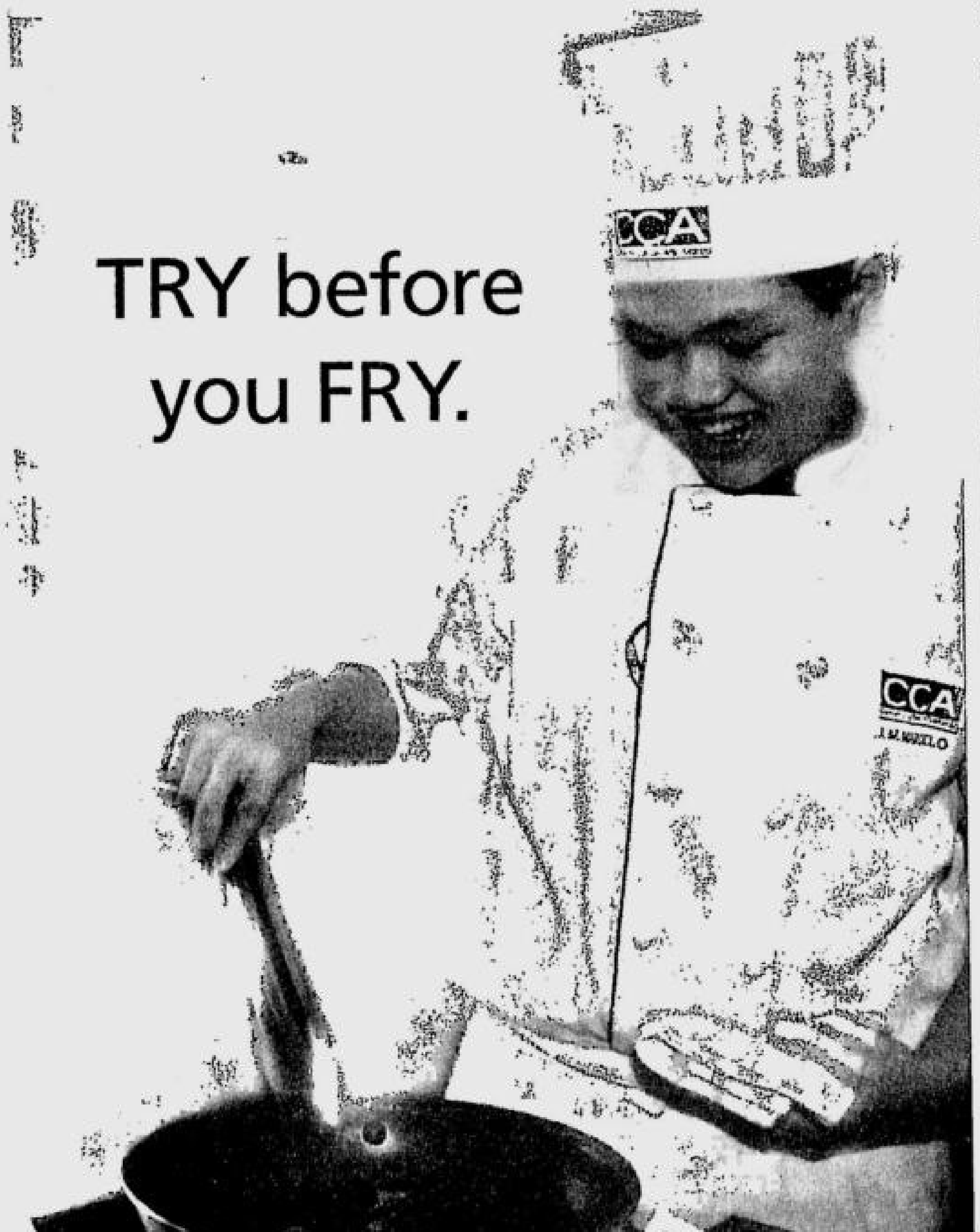

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LIFESTYLE

GOODIES for early birds /C1

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EXPERIMENT with vegetable varieties, chilis and peppers. Add a "kick to healthy dishes."

Heart-friendly cooking tips, salad dressings

KITCHEN RESCUE

Reggie Aspiras

TODAY, I'm sharing my notes from the classes I took on cuisine that is low-fat and healthy for the heart, together with some basic guidelines from the American Heart Association.

These tips can be adopted by those who wish to lose weight and lower their cholesterol. I am adding some low-fat salad dressings, as requested.

· In your recipes, cut salt in half and only season to taste toward the end of your cooking. Replace salt with herbs, spices, flavored vinegar, citrus juice or zest. A good mix would be equal parts of garlic and onion powder, paprika and parsley flakes. This works well in meats, soups and sauces.

· Use light vegetable oil spray or non-stick pans for grilling.

· When stir-frying calls for oil, use stock in place of oil.

· Choose cooking methods that retain flavor, color and nutrients. Steam instead of boil. High and extended heat takes away a lot of nutrients.

· Choose roasting, poaching, stir-frying as cooking methods. Keep coal-grilling of meats to a minimum. It produces cancer-promoting compounds. Avoid eating charred food.

· Microwave cooking is a good way to cook vegetables because the short cooking time reduces nutrient loss, and usually no added water or fat is needed.

· In place of gravy or rich sauces, try vegetable salsas and fruit chutneys as condiments to meat and poultry.

· Opt for low-fat and low-cholesterol prod-

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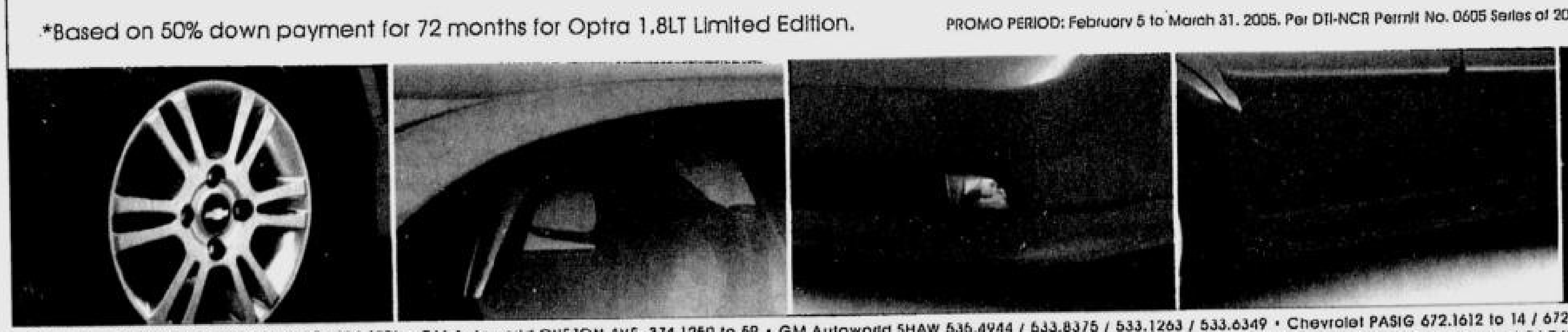

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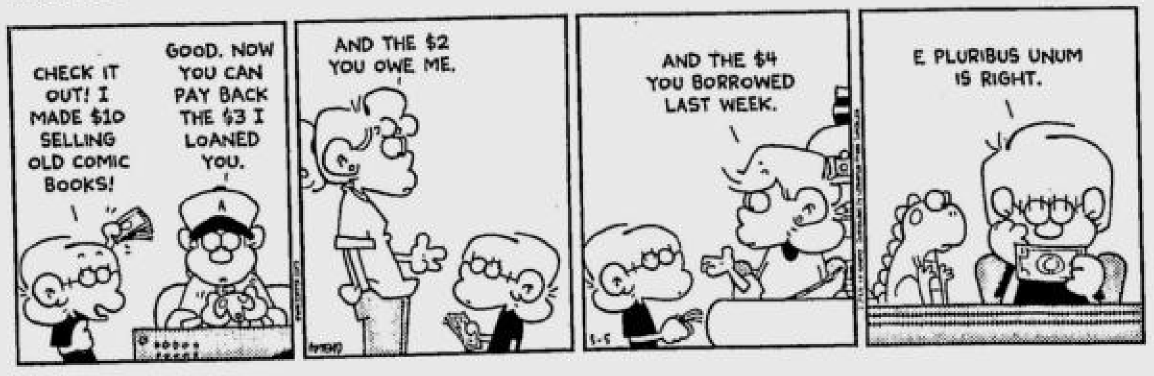
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND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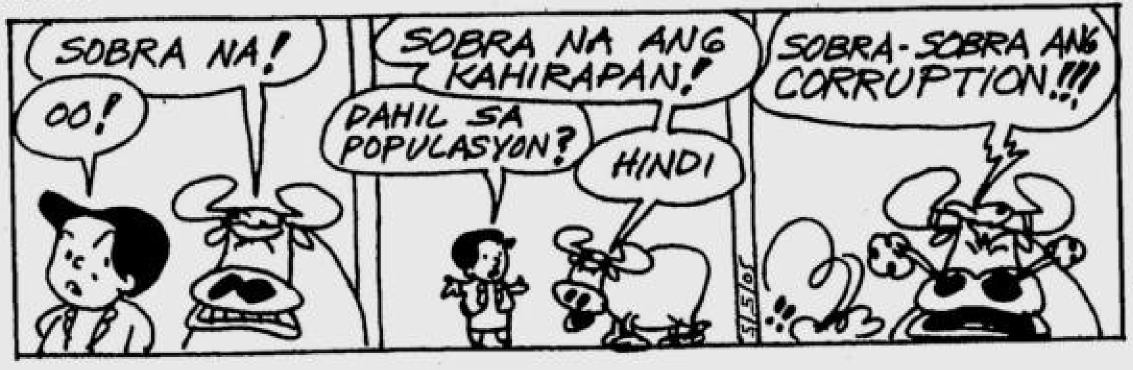
GOOD. NOW YOU CAN PAY BACK THE $3 I LOANED YOU.
AND THE $2 YOU OWE ME.
AND THE $4 YOU BORROWED LAST WEEK.
E PLURIBUS UNUM IS RIGHT.

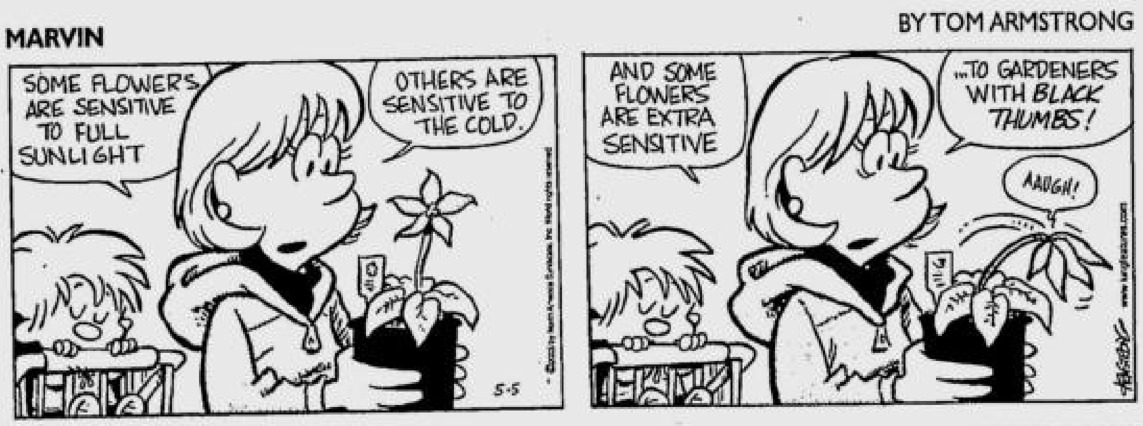
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


SOBRA NA!
OO!
SOBRA NA ANG KAHIRAPAN!
DAHIL SA POPULASYON?
HINDI
SOBRA-SOBRA ANG CORRUPTION!!!
5/5/05

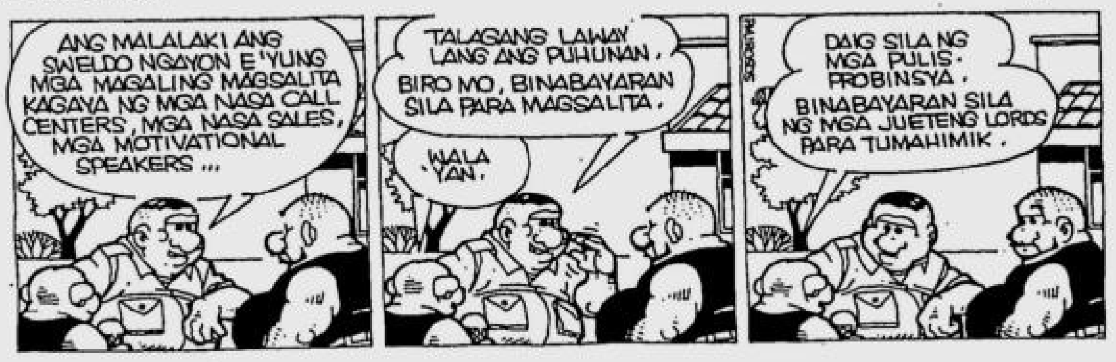
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


SOME FLOWERS ARE SENSITIVE TO FULL SUNLIGHT
OTHERS ARE SENSITIVE TO THE COLD.
AND SOME FLOWERS ARE EXTRA SENSITIVE
...TO GARDENERS WITH BLACK THUMBS!
AAUGH!
5-5

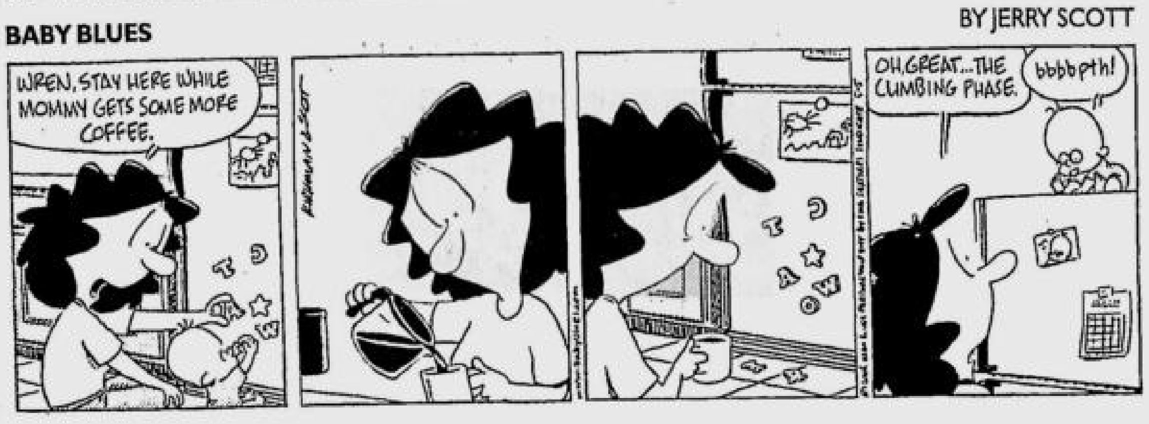
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


ANG MALALAKI ANG SWELDO NGAYON E'YUNG MGA MAGALING MAGSALITA KAGAYA NG MGA NASA CALL CENTERS, MGA NASA SALES, MGA MOTIVATIONAL SPEAKERS ...
TALAGANG LAWAY LANG ANG PUHUNAN. BIRO MO, BINABAYARAN SILA PARA MAGSALITA.
WALA YAN.
DAIG SILA NG MGA PULIS-PROBINSYA. BINABAYARAN SILA NG MGA JUETENG LORDS PARA TUMAHIMIK.

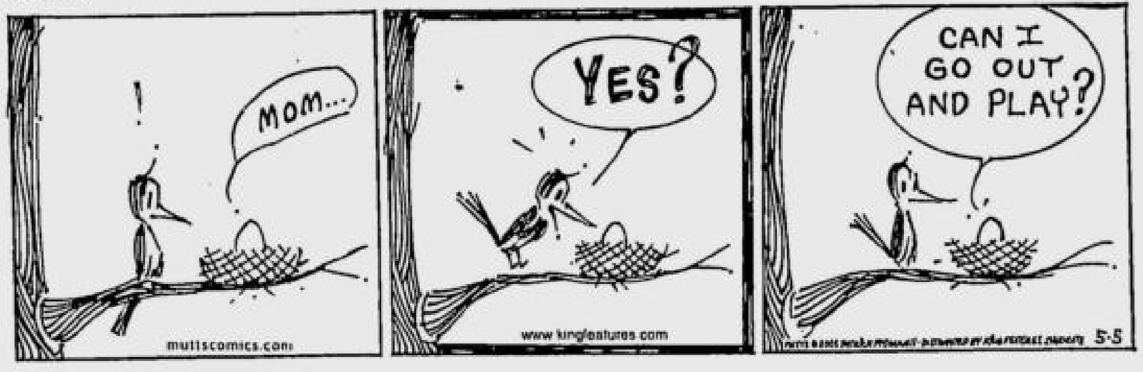
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


WREN, STAY HERE WHILE MOMMY GETS SOME MORE COFFEE.
OH, GREAT... THE CLIMBING PHASE.
bbbbpth!

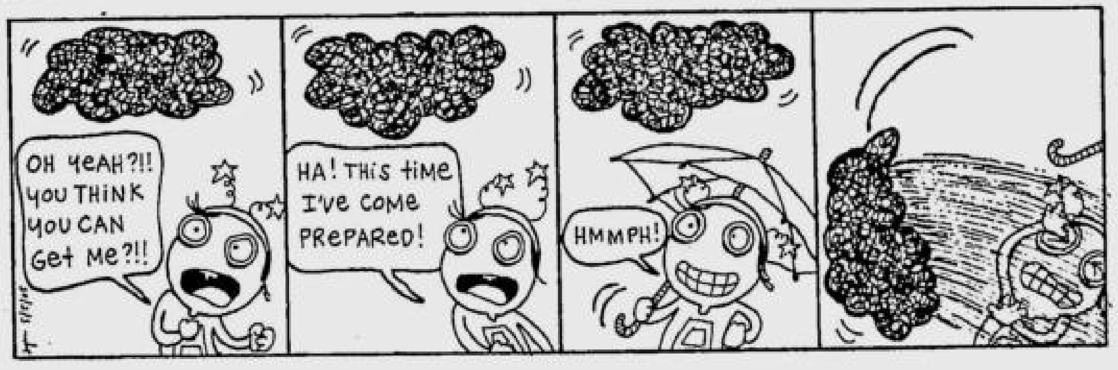
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


!
MOM...
YES?
CAN I GO OUT AND PLAY?
mutiscomics.com
www.kingfeatures.com
5-5

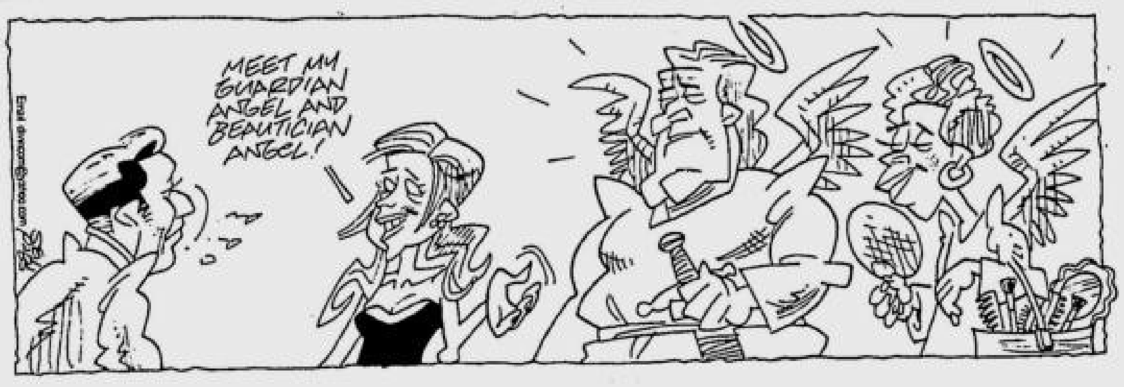
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


OH YEAH?!! YOU THINK YOU CAN GET ME?!!
HA! THIS TIME I'VE COME PREPARED!
HMMPH!

DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


MEET MY GUARDIAN ANGEL AND BEAUTICIAN ANGEL!

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You have wise advice for others. This is because you truly want to enlighten your loved ones and those around you. You want to rouse and motivate them! You are both convincing and insightful. You have much to look forward to because the year ahead might be one of the best years of your life. All doors are open!
Birthdate of: Tammy Wynette, singer; John Rhys-Davies, actor; Karl Marx economic philosopher/writer.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Today the Moon is in your sign. This makes you feel more emotional and aggressive when dealing with others. Be aware of this. It's important to maintain your cool.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): You might have to be firm in defending your position when dealing with the government or some large institution today. You're prepared to fight for your rights. (You are always very reasonable.)

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Discussions with a friend are likely today. Don't promise more than you are prepared to deliver. Just please yourself; don't try to please others.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): In a surprising way, something in your personal life might suddenly become public (like an argument!). Be aware of this. Don't blow your cool so that everyone else can see.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Don't try to win a dispute with someone about political, religious or philosophical matters. It really doesn't matter. (You just want to win an argument.)

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): This is a wonderful day for you to research anything. You have the drive and energy to dive into something and get to the bottom of it. Good!

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Today's Moon opposes your sign. You might feel quite attracted to someone. If this person is wearing a uniform of any kind (like a firefighter), that will really do the trick!

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Put out a little extra effort today to get better organized. Start by getting rid of stuff you don't need. Throw away or give away five things.

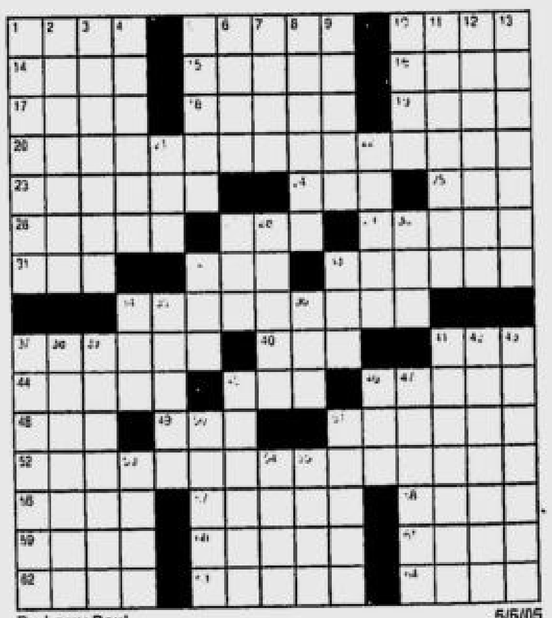
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Your creative talents are hot today! You also feel flirtatious and fun-loving. This is a good time for a party or for any social occasion.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): You might want to stay at home today or, alternatively, entertain others at your home. Family discussions are significant now. Don't be afraid to express your own opinion.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): This is a lovely day for a walk or a short trip. You feel adventurous and ready for action. (You want something different to happen.)

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): If shopping today, you might be tempted to get something luxurious. If you can afford it, go ahead. Life is short (and fat). You're not getting any younger, so why not enjoy yourself?

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Larry Paul
Columbia, MD
5/6/05

ACROSS
1 __ and there
5 Rover's restraint
10 Composer Alban
14 Surf sound
15 Durkheim or Zola
16 Ogler
17 Soap additive
18 Che's compatriot
19 Brightest star in Lyra
20 Start of quote
23 Derrick component
24 San Diego attraction
25 Unrefined mineral
26 Risk a citation
27 Clouds' milieu
29 Electoral districts
31 Back-and-forth curve
32 Letters before an alias
33 Command
34 Source of quote, maybe
37 Endeavored
40 NATO member
41 Back in a boat
44 Sports venue
45 PC key
46 Toyota model
48 Seventh tones
49 Balderdash!
51 Annie, for one
52 End of quote
56 Emerald land
57 Skin cream
58 Man or Anglesey
59 Church section
60 Host
61 Carpe __!
62 Iditarod entry
63 Is a bookworm
64 Corn servings

DOWN
1 Gallivant
2 Banking delays?
3 French stars
4 Gauge pointer
5 Grove of baseball
6 Abu Dhabi ruler
7 General assistant
8 Squalid
9 First word in meetings
10 Group of girls
11 Visual blight
12 Best wishes
13 Superlatively ashen
21 Homer's neighbor
22 Downgrade
27 Schuss
28 Capital of Afghanistan
30 I've got it!
32 Long spell
33 Bikini top
34 Distant
35 Egg-producing organ
36 Body shop's $ quote
37 Glossy fabrics
38 Insignificant
39 Reticence
41 Loss of language ability
42 More slight
43 Two-seaters
45 Receiving callers
46 Lanka lead-in
47 Optimist's viewpoint
50 Animal in Rotterdam?
51 Made-up monsters
53 Bassoon requirement
54 People of the Andes
55 Requirement

Wednesday's Puzzle Solved

C	A	B	A	L	■	C	A	L	M	■	A	V	A	S
O	R	I	B	I	■	A	R	E	A	■	S	E	M	I
T	A	E	B	O	■	R	E	N	T	■	K	N	A	R
■	B	R	A	N	D	O	C	O	R	L	E	O	N	E
■	■	■	■	E	R	M	A	■	O	L	D	M	A	N
P	A	Y	O	L	A	■	■	D	N	A	■	■	■	■
O	W	E	N	■	M	L	S	A	■	M	A	I	D	S
L	A	N	C	A	S	T	E	R	G	A	N	T	R	Y
K	Y	S	E	R	■	A	T	T	U	■	T	E	E	N
■	■	■	■	G	A	I	■	■	A	N	F	M	I	C
A	T	E	O	U	T	■	L	E	V	I	■	■	■	■
K	I	N	G	S	L	E	Y	G	A	N	D	H	I	■
I	T	A	L	■	A	S	I	A	■	T	O	A	D	S
R	A	C	E	■	S	A	N	D	■	H	U	R	O	N
A	N	T	S	■	T	U	G	S	■	S	P	E	L	L

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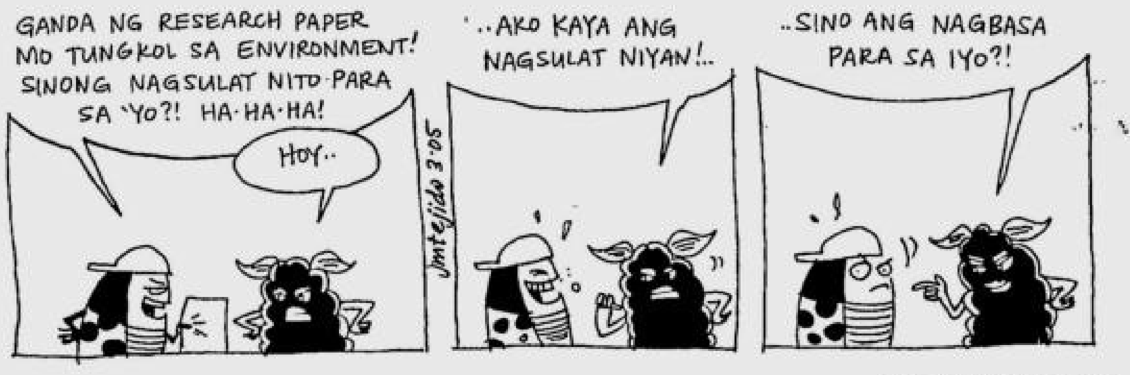
5/5/05

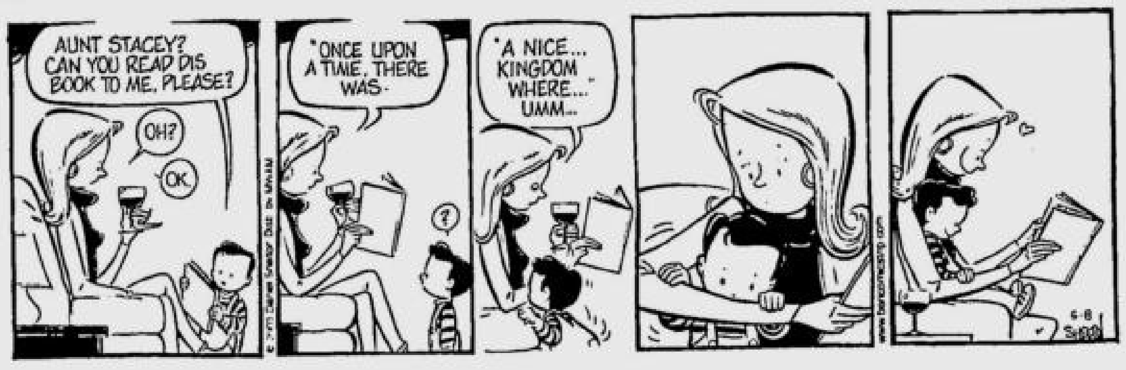
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


GANDA NG RESEARCH PAPER MO TUNGKOL SA ENVIRONMENT! SINONG NAGSULAT NITO PARA SA 'YO?! HA-HA-HA!
Hoy..
..AKO KAYA ANG NAGSULAT NIYAN!..
..SINO ANG NAGBASA PARA SA IYO?!
Jmtejido 3-05

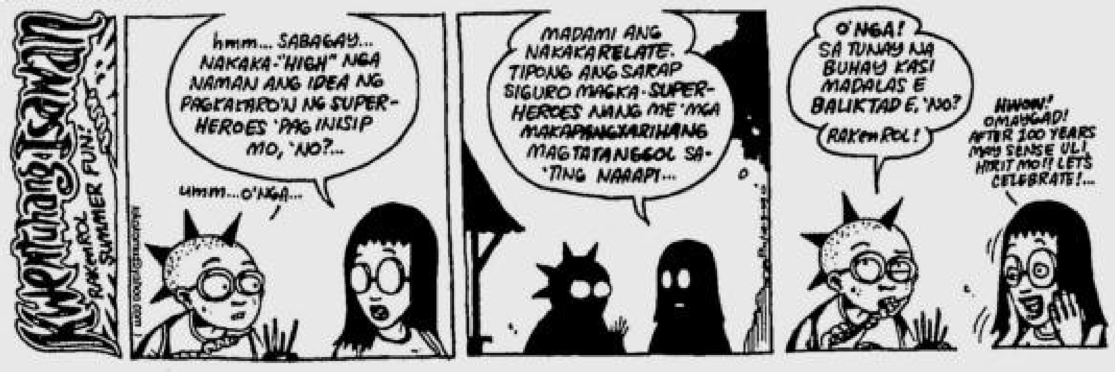
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


AUNT STACEY? CAN YOU READ DIS BOOK TO ME, PLEASE?
OH?
OK.
"ONCE UPON A TIME, THERE WAS-
?
"A NICE... KINGDOM WHERE..." UMM...

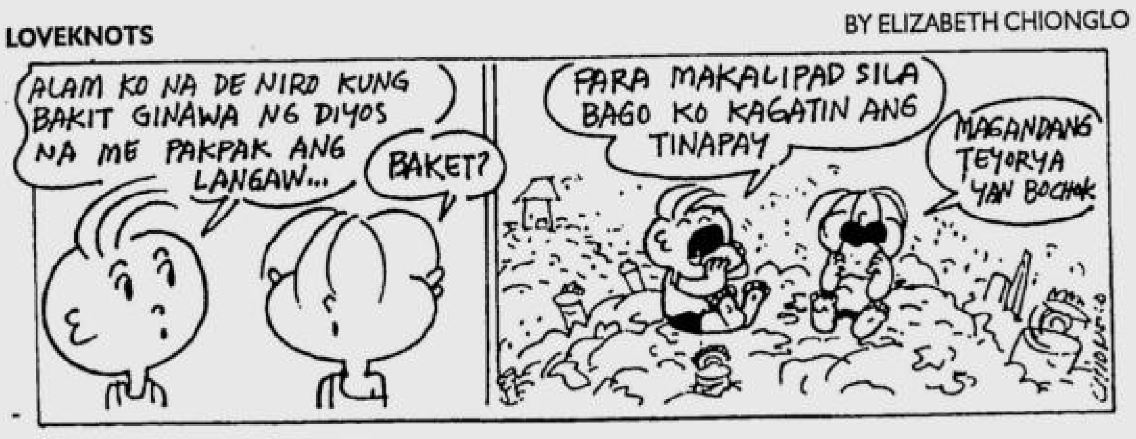
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


Kwentuhang Tawan
RAKenROL SUMMER FUN!
hmm... SABAGAY... NAKAKA-"HIGH" NGA NAMAN ANG IDEA NG PAGKAKARO'N NG SUPER-HEROES 'PAG INISIP MO, 'NO?...
umm...O'NGA...
MADAMI ANG NAKAKARELATE. TIPONG ANG SARAP SIGURO MAGKA-SUPER-HEROES NANG ME 'MGA MAKAPANGYARIHANG MAGTATANGGOL SA-'TING NAAAPI...
O'NGA! SA TUNAY NA BUHAY KASI MADALAS E BALIKTAD E, 'NO?
RAKenROL!
HWOW! OMAYGAD! AFTER 100 YEARS MAY SENSE ULI HIRIT MO!! LETS CELEBRATE!...

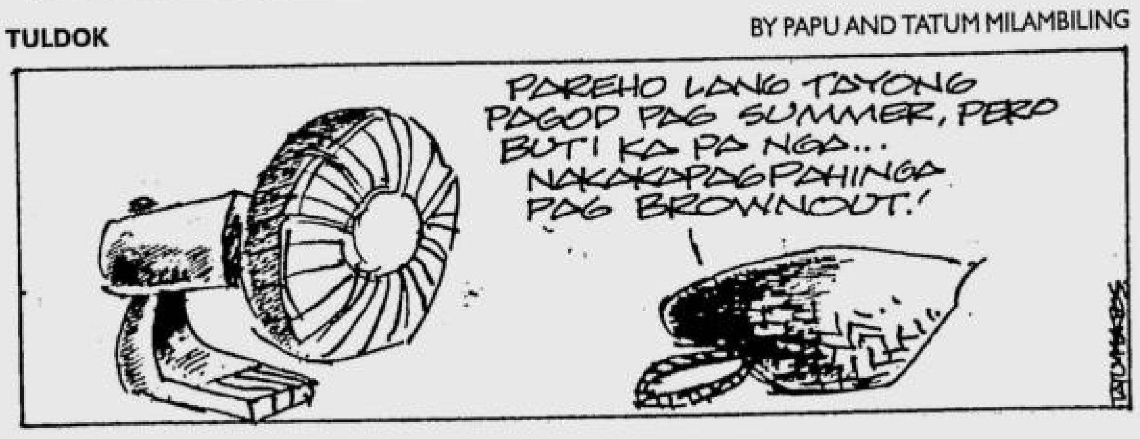
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


ALAM KO NA DE NIRO KUNG BAKIT GINAWA NG DIYOS NA ME PAKPAK ANG LANGAW...
BAKET?
PARA MAKALIPAD SILA BAGO KO KAGATIN ANG TINAPAY
MAGANDANG TEYORYA YAN BOCHOK

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


PAREHO LANG TAYONG PAGOD PAG SUMMER, PERO BUTI KA PA NGA... NAKAKAPAGPAHINGA PAG BROWNOUT!

Consumers unable to exercise rights

THE CONSUMER
Marietta Velasco Giron

IT IS almost impossible these days to get business establishments to honor warranties, or have them replace products that are defective or that fall short of expectation.

Surely, it is not because the consumer act is written in legal parlance that the lay person has trouble understanding it.

One thing is clear from complaints sent to this column by consumers. More and more establishments are making it difficult for customers to avail of their basic rights as consumers.

For example, Anne A. Jambora complained that the iPod In-Ear Headphones she got from Palm One Pod Central at the Digital Exchange Center in Glorietta did not meet the tonal quality of other earphones of the same brand she compared them to. Digital Exchange did not have a sample of the product that customers could try prior to purchase, so she took the salesman's word that it was better than the one intended for her iPod model.

The headphone, which was more expensive, produced a flat sound—heavy on tweeters with near zero bass resonance. "*Tunog lata*" was how others described it.

The store manager, Elbert Cuenca, refused to replace the item or give her a refund. He told Jambora, as well as this columnist, that the client was not using the headphones properly. What other way is there to use headphones except to "plug" them into your ears?

The concern of consumer Robert C. Gomez raises tricky issues. According to him, the JVC Handy Camera he bought last year at the Automatic Center in Makati failed to work five days before the one-year warranty lapsed. By the time his complaint reached the persons at the store and the repair center, the warranty had expired.

He added that he refused to pay the quoted repair charges for the camera. The repair center told him the unit broke down because of overexposure to sunlight.

Gomez had consulted the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) and received recently the result of their investigation on his complaint.

"Based on the DTI investigation, I was told that JVC was offering a 15-percent discount on the cost of the part that was to be replaced (explaining) that my complaint came five days after the warranty had lapsed," he said.

"I countered that I would not accept the offer and added that I would not pay for repair of (damage) caused by (exposure) to the sun. Did that mean that their videocam was really not for outdoor use?... Wow, paying P29,900 for the camera and using it only four times (meant a) cost (of) P7,475 per use.

Outdated warranty law

"The Consumer Act of the Philippines or Republic Act No. 7394 is practically a toothless law," says Vic del Fierro Jr., president of the Coalition for Consumer Protection and Welfare.

For example, he pointed out, penalties for violation of provisions covering consumer products and service warranties ranged from a measly P1,000 to P50,000.

By the way, Del Fierro has written a detailed report on the coalition's positions and suggestions on the different consumer protection bills filed at the Senate. These are:

- Senate Bill No. 1812 by Sen. Aquilino Pimentel, Jr.: An Act to Enforce Warranties on the Sale of Motor Vehicles, and Imposing Penalties for Violation thereof
- SB No. 775 by Sen. Manuel B. Villar Jr.: An Act Providing Protection and Remedies to Buyers of New and Used Motor Vehicles
- SB No. 1345 by Sen. Ralph G. Recto: An Act Requiring Business Establishments Nationwide to Set up Consumer Welfare Desks (CDWs) and Develop Comprehensive Complaints Handling Program
- SB No. 266 by Sen. Sergio Osmeña III: An Act to Further Strengthen Consumer Protection, Amending for this Purpose Certain Provisions of Republic Act. No. 7394, the Consumer Act of the Philippines

He further informed us about two consumers rights (there are eight in all) that supposedly protect buyers from substandard products and warranty abuse: Right to choose products at competitive prices with an assurance of satisfactory quality; and right to be compensated for misrepresentation, shoddy goods or unsatisfactory services.

For a copy of the position of the Coalition for Consumer Protection and Welfare on the Senate bills, call Del Fierro at 0916-3433155.

Fixed at last

Malate residents whose phones were dead for more than three weeks are happy that the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Company has finally fixed them.

Now the question is, who should take responsibility for the inconvenience, lost income and other damage they suffered? If cable thieves are to blame, then law enforcers should do everything to prevent a repeat of this situation that has also happened in other parts of Metro Manila.

Loss of a phone these days is more than an annoyance. It has the potential to kill business.

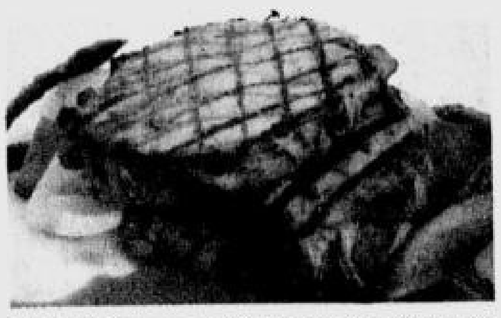
E-mail the author at giron@mailstation.nettion.net

Week-long homage to moms

CRAVINGS Restaurant has prepared a special menu for its week-long "Celebrate Mom" until May 8. The restaurant has also lined up activities and surprises for mothers.

The Mother's Day menu is available in all Cravings outlets in Metro Manila.

BADJIE Guerrero-Trinidad and Annie Guerrero with the special Melon Cream Cake



GRILLED Bacon and Mushroom Stuffed Pork Chop with Charcuterie Sauce, Rice Pilaf and Vegetable Melange

CRAB-STUFFED Chicken Supreme Oscar with Creamy Mushroom Risotto and Roasted Asparagus

Every order from the Mother's Day menu on May 8 also comes with a free gift pack courtesy of Crabtree and Evelyn.

The set menu offers two choices: Crab Stuffed Chicken Supreme Oscar with Creamy Mushroom Risotto and Roasted Asparagus or Grilled Bacon and Mushroom Stuffed Porkchop with Charcuterie sauce, rice pilaf and vegetable melange.

Badjie Guerrero-Trinidad said the meals were specially prepared to convey the restaurant chain's appreciation for mothers.

Cravings also prepared Mother's Day packages for presents or giveaways. Cakes include the Four Seasons, Jeweled Fruit and Cheese Gateau, Melon Cream Cake and Mango Dream Pie. Cookies Alphabet Frosted, Assorted Nibblers, Mini Carrot Muffins, among others—are wrapped in special packages.

Call 6891111. Cravings outlets are located at Katipunan, Quezon City; Metrowalk, Ortigas; Tomas Morato, QC; Shangri-La Mall, Mandaluyong; Robinson's Galleria, Ortigas; Robinsons Place Manila; Fraser Place Serviced Residence, Makati; Festival Mall, Alabang; and West Avenue, QC.

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Heart-friendly cooking tips, salad dressings

From page D1

ucts.

- Pick olive or canola oil. Drain off visible fat while cooking, blot pan-fried foods on paper towels to absorb extra grease, and allow soups to chill to skim off fat before reheating to serve.
- Reduce fat in baked goods. Substitute apple sauce, pureed prunes, mashed bananas or yogurt for up to half of the shortening. Make moist cakes with reduced fat.
- Substitute some whole grain products for all-purpose flour in your cooking. Try whole wheat or soy flour and oatmeal in bread and muffins. Soy flour is another good substitute (Healthy Options).
- Eat fruit desserts—fresh, stewed and cobblers. Choose frozen yogurt, sherbet and sorbet instead of ice cream. Eat cake with fruit sauce instead of frosting or cream.
- Use two egg whites instead of one whole egg to significantly reduce the fat and cholesterol content of some baked goods.
- One egg yolk contains almost the entire daily allowance for cholesterol. Egg whites contain no cholesterol and are excellent sources of protein, so use egg whites instead. In most recipes, one egg white and a little vegetable oil will substitute for a whole egg.
- Adopt the healthy habit of spacing your meals over three-hour periods. Eat vegetables five times a day. Add veggies whenever possible. Experiment with variety.
- Use only fresh vegetables and fruits. They have no or little fat and tend to be low in sodium, generally high in fiber and vitamins. Some exceptions include coconut meat, mangoes, grapes and avocados.
- To enhance flavors, use fresh herbs. Add citrus zest or juice, vinegar, dry mustard or chili peppers.
- Toast seeds and whole spices on a dry skillet until fragrant for maximum flavor.
- Roast vegetables in the oven to caramelize and bring out their sweetness and full flavor.

Now the recipes! If they don't taste good well, they're not supposed to, you're on a diet! Kidding! They're pretty good!

The procedure for all dressings is to combine the ingredients, whisking to blend. If the recipe is oil-based, add oil last in a slow stream, whisking until the dressing is emulsified. Salt is optional. Adjust spices/herbs to suit your taste. Use a sugar substitute like Splenda.

Make the dressings an hour before serving to develop flavor.

Salad

Choose from any of these and top with choice of dressing: mixed salad greens, fish, lobsters, shrimps, scallops, skinless chicken breast (steamed, pan-grilled or poached), tuna chunks in water, cherry tomatoes, onions, fresh fruit, radish, peppers, cucumbers.

Ranch

1 c plain low-fat yogurt or low-fat sour cream
2 tsp grated red onion
1 tbsp chopped parsley leaves
2 tsp chopped fresh dill or 1 tsp dried dill
2 tsp lemon juice
1 clove garlic
salt and pepper

Sesame Seed

3 tbsp rice vinegar
1 tbsp light/low-salt soy sauce
1 tbsp sugar to taste
1 tbsp grated white onion (squeeze out juice then use juice for recipe)
1/3 c canola oil
salt and pepper
2 tbsp sesame seeds, toasted and pounded

Dayap

1/4 c dayap juice
sugar to taste
3 tbsp light olive oil
salt and pepper to taste

Caesar

1 tsp each, garlic and onion powder
1/2 tsp mixed Italian herbs
1 1/2 tsp minced garlic
2 tbsp white wine vinegar
1 tbsp each, Dijon mustard and balsamic vinegar
1 tsp lemon zest
sugar, pinch
salt and pepper
1 c light olive or canola oil

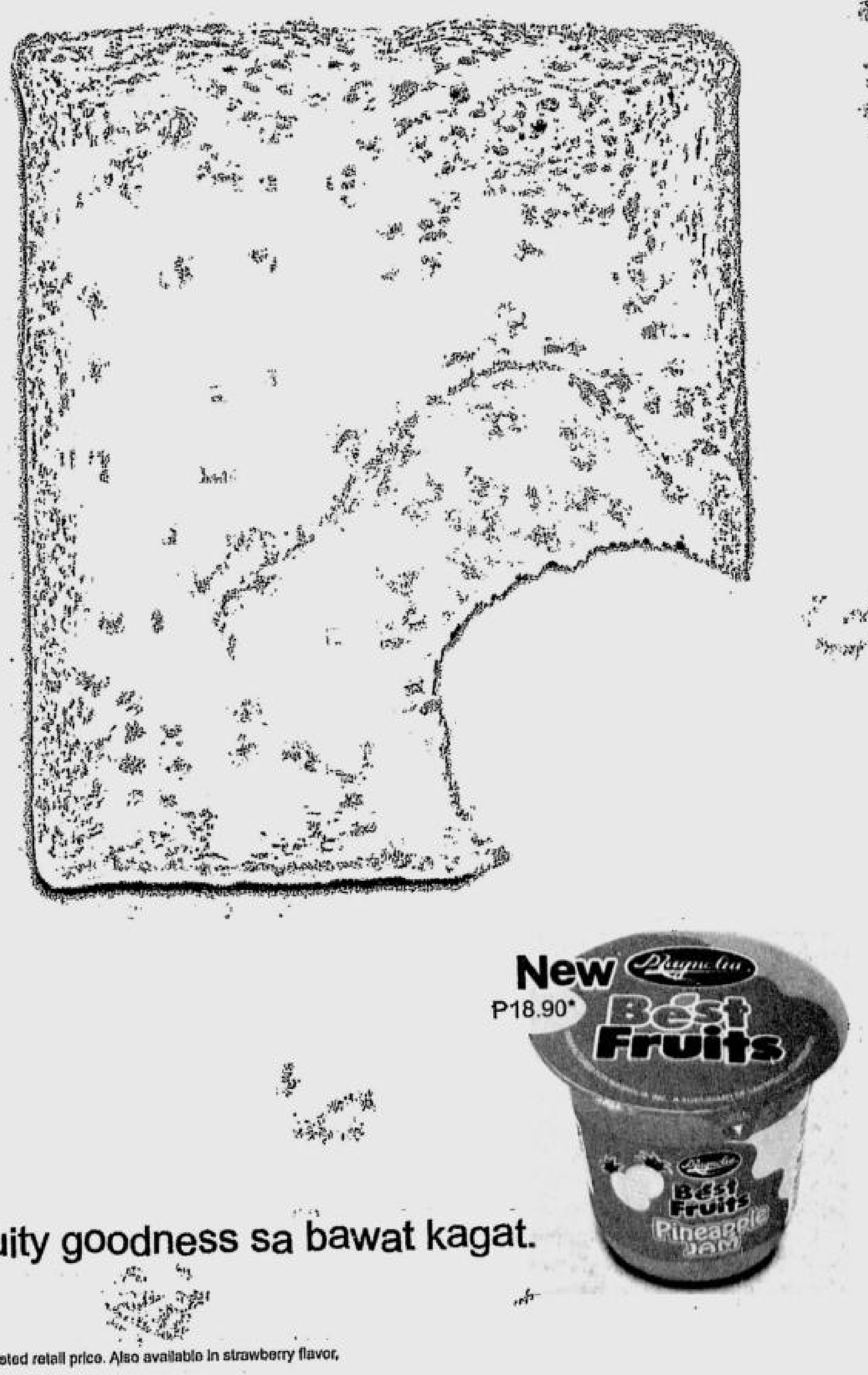
Garlic and Citrus

2 tbsp roasted garlic paste
1/4 tsp light olive oil
3/4 c light sour cream
1 tsp each, garlic and onion powder
1/2 tsp each, thyme and oregano
1/4 tsp paprika
1/4 c parsley leaves
1 tbsp chopped chives
1/2 tsp lemon or orange zest
salt and pepper

Balsamic Vinaigrette

1/4 c canola oil
1 clove garlic, minced
1/3 c balsamic vinegar
herb of choice
salt, pepper and sugar to taste

For questions and comments, text 0917-8399888.



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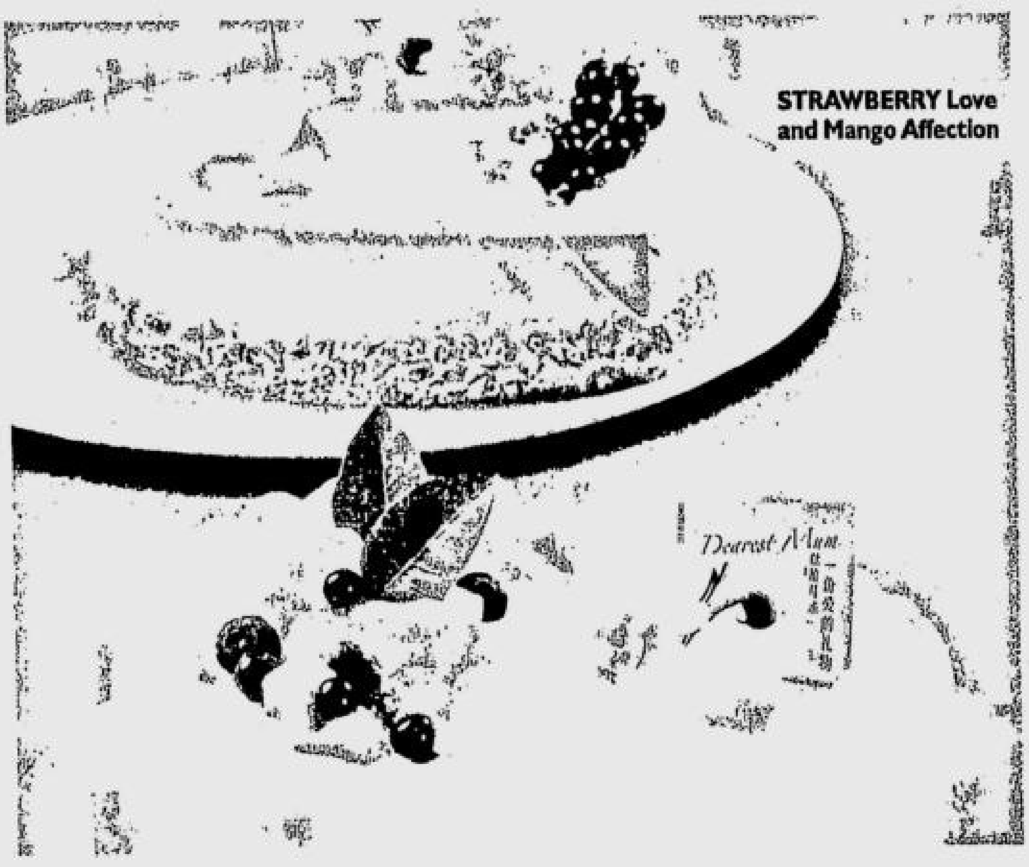
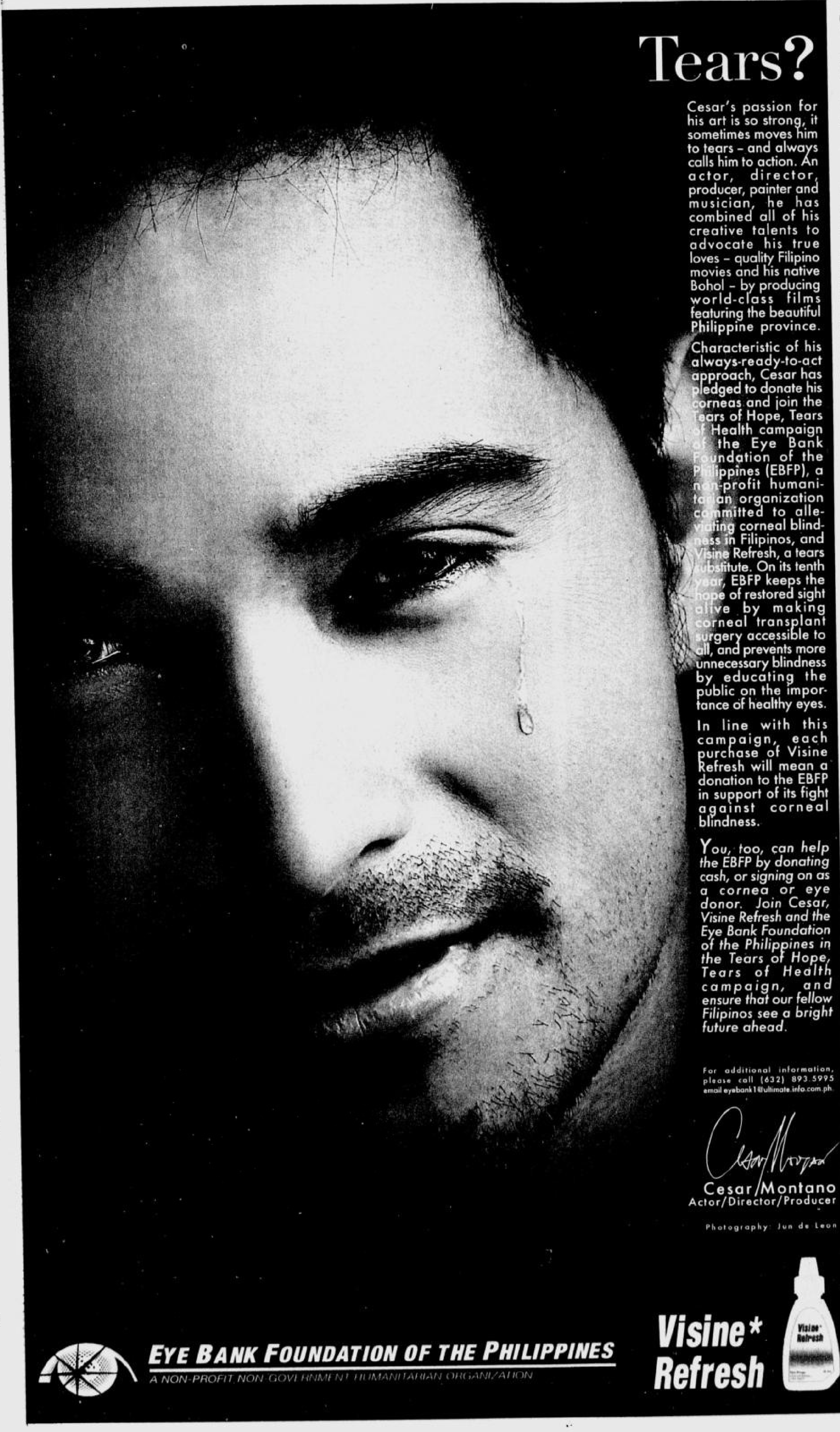
Love and affection for mom

BREADTALK celebrates Mother's Day with two irresistible cakes for mom. Strawberry Love has vanilla cream sandwiched between vanilla chiffon and fresh strawberries and mixed fruits. Mango Affection's vanilla chiffon is filled with mango bits embedded in fresh mango cream. Available until May 31. BreadTalk has outlets in Alabang Town Center (8074471), Glorietta 4 (8182232), Rockwell Power Plant Mall (8968227) and Megamall A (6386880).



STRAWBERRY Love and Mango Affection


Tears?

Cesar's passion for his art is so strong, it sometimes moves him to tears – and always calls him to action. An actor, director, producer, painter and musician, he has combined all of his creative talents to advocate his true loves – quality Filipino movies and his native Bohol – by producing world-class films featuring the beautiful Philippine province.

Characteristic of his always-ready-to-act approach, Cesar has pledged to donate his corneas and join the Tears of Hope, Tears of Health campaign of the Eye Bank Foundation of the Philippines (EBFP), a non-profit humanitarian organization committed to alleviating corneal blindness in Filipinos, and Visine Refresh, a tears substitute. On its tenth year, EBFP keeps the hope of restored sight alive by making corneal transplant surgery accessible to all, and prevents more unnecessary blindness by educating the public on the importance of healthy eyes.

In line with this campaign, each purchase of Visine Refresh will mean a donation to the EBFP in support of its fight against corneal blindness.

You, too, can help the EBFP by donating cash, or signing on as a cornea or eye donor. Join Cesar, Visine Refresh and the Eye Bank Foundation of the Philippines in the Tears of Hope, Tears of Health campaign, and ensure that our fellow Filipinos see a bright future ahead.

For additional information, please call (632) 893.5995
email eyebank1@ultimate.info.com.ph

Cesar Montano
Actor/Director/Producer

Photography: Jun de Leon

Visine* Refresh

EYE BANK FOUNDATION OF THE PHILIPPINES
A NON-PROFIT NON-GOVERNMENT HUMANITARIAN ORGANIZATION

Cook up a treat on Mother's Day

MAKE Mother's Day doubly special. Cook up a special meal for her.

Chef Dino Guingona shares his recipe for a traditional dish loaded with the goodness of a good home-cooked meal.

Dress up any special occasion spread with a dip made with two simple ingredients, catsup and Lea & Perrins Worcestershire Sauce. Add a tablespoon of the sauce to give an interesting twist to any dip.

Lea & Perrins Worcestershire Sauce is another quality product of HP Foods Ltd. of the United Kingdom.

Chicken Adobo Flakes in Spinach and Garlic Overload

6 T canola oil
10 cloves garlic, crushed
18 cloves large garlic, finely minced
¼ c cider vinegar
¼ c soy sauce
6 T Lea & Perrins Worcestershire Sauce
1 T brown sugar
1/3 t freshly ground black peppercorn
1 c water
¼ K chicken, cut into serving pieces
½ K fresh spinach
2 c long-grain rice
sea salt to taste
1 pc large ripe tomato, seeded and sliced in long strips
1 pc ring mold (or drinking glass, slightly greased)

Mix the crushed garlic, vinegar, soy sauce, salt, Lea & Perrins Worcestershire Sauce, sugar, freshly ground peppercorn and water.

Marinate chicken pieces in mixture for approximately 1 hour. Bring chicken and marinade mixture to a boil, then simmer until tender. Remove chicken pieces and drain well.

In another saute pan, add 3 tablespoons canola oil and heat chicken thoroughly until they are browned.

De-bone and shred chicken pieces until flaky. Fry once more until chicken becomes crispy. Set aside.

Meanwhile, add remaining 3 tablespoons of canola oil to another saute pan and briefly saute the minced garlic over low heat until evenly browned, making sure not to burn as it will become bitter.

Turn up heat; when smoke begins to appear, immediately add spinach to prevent it from releasing water.

Season generously with salt and pepper. Allow spinach to cool.

In a greased mold, alternate rice, spinach and *adobo* flakes and glaze generously with *adobo* sauce. Garnish with toasted garlic and sliced tomatoes.

(Serves three; total preparation and cooking time: 1 hr, 15 minutes.)

CHICKEN Adobo Flakes in Spinach and Garlic Overload